UNITARIANISM

Philosophically and Theologically Examined:

IN A SERIES OF PERIODICAL NUMBERS;

COMPRISING

A COMPLETE REFUTATION

OF THE

LEADING PRINCIPLES

OF

THE UNITARIAN SYSTEM.

"Videte, ne quis vos decipiat per Philosophiam et inanem fallaciam, secundum traditionem hominum, secundum elementa mundi, et non secundum Christum: quia in ipso inhabitat omnis plenitudo Divinitatis corporaliter."

"Beware, lest any man impose upon you by Philosophy and Vain fallacy, according to the tradition of men, according to the rudiments of the World, and not according to Christ: For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead corporally." Colossians, ii chapter, 8, 9.

BY THE REV. ANTHONY KOHLMANN,
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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That, on the twelfth day of September, in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the forty-sixth, Anthony Kohlmann, of the said district, has deposited in the office of the Clerk of the District Court, for the District of Columbia, the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as author, in the words following, to wit:

"Unitarianism Philosophically and Theologically examined: in a series of periodical numbers; comprising a complete refutation of the leading principles of the Unitarian system."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and also to the Act, entitled "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled 'An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching, historical and other prints."

[L. S.] IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the public seal of my office, the day and year aforesaid.

EDMUND I. LEE,
Clerk of the District Court for the District of Columbia.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE WHOLE WORK.

A Religion always attacked, and always victorious: a Religion, that gathers strength from the very means which, in the nature of things, ought to annihilate it, I mean, from cruel persecutions, heresies, and schisms: A religion, in fine, that has withstood the most violent assaults and combined efforts of paganism, libertinism, and of the powers of the earth, for no less than eighteen hundred years; such a religion is incontestibly and eminently the work of God. Adorned with the accumulated trophies of so many ages, she solemnly proclaims her divine origin, and compels even her inveterate foes to acknowledge, in her native and invincible strength, the finger of God, and to exclaim, with the Magi of Egypt, "*Digitus Dei est hic.*" *The finger of God is here.**

Now, such is the Religion of Jesus Christ. It no sooner appeared upon earth, but it met with universal contradiction. The jealous Synagogue began this cruel war with an unparalleled fury, and cut off, within a few years, some of its chief supports: next sprang up a whole swarm of proud and self-conceited innovators, who successively attacked all its sacred dogmas. These, again, were succeeded by the most virulent writers of Paganism, the Celsuses, the Porphyriuses, the Plotins, the Julians, &c. who, armed with all the resources of genius and the subtleties of philosophy, took the field against it, with the frantic determination not to retreat till the Christian name should be utterly exterminated; whilst, on the other hand, the masters of Rome were employing all the force of their empire against the infant church of Christ: fire, sword, gibbets, boiling caldrons, slow-fire, wild beasts, racks, maiming of limbs, &c. all were made use of against the professors of the Christian name. Vain efforts! Useless undertakings! This work comes from God—the power of men cannot stop it: "the blood of martyrs is indeed flowing over

* Exod. viii. 19.

all the provinces of the Roman empire, and that for the space of three hundred years;" but, as Tertullian elegantly observes,* "that very blood becomes the seed of new Christians:" for one martyr that is cut off, ten new Christians rise around him; like the tree that is pruned, it shoots out in new luxuriancy. All that savage barbarity can possibly contrive, is resorted to by Pagan Rome, to hinder "the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands,"† (I mean, the infant church of Christ,) from increasing, and this tender plant from spreading its roots.

But we learn from Tertullian, that, as early as the second century, that stone, so small in its beginning, had already grown into a mountain that covered the whole civilized earth, and that tender plant had become a tree, that extended its roots from sea to sea, and afforded shade to all the polished nations of the world.‡ So little can men do against the designs of Heaven.

When, after the unavailing efforts of three hundred years, the Roman emperors were convinced of the impossibility of arresting the progress of this work, which all the power of men could not arrest, they thought it wisdom to bow down their haughty necks to the sweet yoke of Jesus—it was nanatural, it seems, to expect that no one afterwards would be tempted to make war against God and against his Christ; but no: Christ, who had bequeathed to his church all that was dear to him, his divine doctrine, his sacraments, his promises, and perpetual assistance, would likewise have it so, that during her militant state upon earth, she should share with him in struggles, trials, and sufferings, in order to enter like himself into his eternal kingdom of rest. He would have it so, that, as she was altogether supernatural and divine in her primitive establishment, so she should announce to all future generations, by the very state of her trials of every description, and of her glorious victories, that she continued to be altogether supernatural, heavenly, and divine. He, accordingly,

* "Semen est sanguis christianorum," in Apolog.
† Daniel, ii. 34, 35. ‡ Matth. xiii. 32.

permitted that, as soon as Pagan Rome had laid down her arms against the spouse of Christ, a new and much more alarming war should break out against her from within, by a host of most powerful enemies, succeeding each other in close array, by the Arians, the Nestorians, the Monothelites, the Pelagians, Donatists, Macedonians, &c.: in the eighth century, by the Iconoclasts, and in the ninth, by Photius and the abettors of the Greek schism: enemies, courted, patronized, and supported by all the power of the Roman emperors. But the kingdom of Christ, that perpetual empire which shall not be given over to another people, and which itself shall consume all other empires*—the church, I say, unprotected, abandoned, and left to her own native vigour and firmness, triumphed most gloriously over them all; they had no other effect but to make men sensible of her superior virtue, of her divine efficacy. She saw them all rise, she saw them rage, but she saw them likewise die away; and so die away, that, had it not been for the care of Christian writers, their very names would have been for ever lost to us; so that she may truly say of her numerous and powerful enemies, what the Angel affirmed of the enemies of her divine founder, "*Defuncti sunt qui quærebant animam pueri.*" *They are dead who sought the life of the child.*† They, indeed, at times, seem apparently to triumph, and in the paroxysm of their phrenzy, to exclaim, "We have devoured her: we have devoured her!" But, before long, she casts around her majestic look, and says, "I have seen the wicked highly exalted and lifted up like the cedars of Libanus: And I passed by, and lo! he was not: and I sought him, and his place was not found."‡ What a striking illustration of this her divine strength, has not the French revolution furnished us with? When iniquity like an impetuous torrent threatened to spread over the whole world, and to banish the very name of Christ from the earth, behold that same religion, hitherto in chains and dungeons, abandoned, persecuted, and destitute of all human succour, resum-

* Daniel, ii. 44.
† Matth. ii. 20.
‡ Psalm xxxvi. 35, 36.

ing, "without the hands of men," her native dignity; seeking around for "those that sought her life, and lo! they are not;" and sitting herself on the throne of her venerable pontiffs, appears to the astonished world more venerable, more vigorous, more august than ever. "Who has done all this? Is it not visibly the hand of the Most High?"

Such, therefore, being the exalted and glorious destiny of the church of Christ upon earth, to be always attacked and to be always victorious, she does not fear, whatever calamities may rush upon her, or whatever enemies may rise up against her; for, confiding in the glorious promises made to her, she knows, that all the power of men cannot pull down what God has set up; and that the gates of hell cannot prevail against her, because she is built on a rock, by the same mighty hand, which has laid the foundation of the universe.

Thus, if religion deeply mourns at the rise of new errors, it is not, because she fears for her own preservation, but, because she apprehends lest some of her children be seduced by the charm of novelty, and thus suffer shipwreck of their faith. Unitarianism, whose confutation we have undertaken, will, no doubt, share the fate of all former sects, and of other human inventions, for the oracle of Christ will, at all times, be literally verified: "Every plant, which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up."* Still, as this new sect intrudes itself on the public under the seducing cloak of religion, although it evidently saps the very foundations of Christianity, the author of these numbers thought, it would be rendering service to the uninformed and unsuspecting part of the community, to lay before them the unshaken principles, on which the edifice of the Christian religion is based, and the palpable inconsistencies, into which those must inevitably run, that dare attack so grand, so noble, and so majestic an edifice. To reclaim some from error, and to caution others against seduction, is the only object of the author, who will deem himself amply rewarded for his labour, if he be but happy enough to suceeed in saving one immortal soul, which,

* Matth. xv. v. 13.

in his estimation, is of greater importance than the gain of the whole world, since the Incarnate Wisdom said: "What does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Matth. xvi. 16.

The style of this work will be plain and concise, such as only suits lucubrations like this, which are intended to present to the reader a concatenation of principles and logical inferences necessarily connected together. In a performance of this nature, the object is to set the truth in as clear a light as possible, to adapt it to every capacity, to show, at one glance, the stress of the argument, and the logical conclusiveness of the whole argumentation; with a view of attaining this object, the writer thought it preferable rather to sacrifice beauty of diction than perspicuity, and the intuitive perception of the stress and force of the argument. It is no small satisfaction for the author to reflect, that, whilst he is vindicating the cause of the Catholic church, of which he glories to be a member, he is, at once, pleading the cause of Christianity at large, and asserting the grand interests of all religious societies.

The author, once for all, solemnly protests, that it is, by no means, his intention to have any thing to do with the personal character of the professors of Unitarianism: He attacks principles, not persons; those he considers as inconsistent with sound logic and divine revelation; these are entitled to his highest consideration for their superior talents and other most valuable qualifications. If, therefore, in the sequel of this work, the reader should happen to meet with any expression or epithet, which might appear to him too severe, or too harsh, let it fall upon Unitarianism—not upon the Unitarian.

It is likewise far from the intention of the author, to elicit controversy by the present publication, being as averse to it by disposition as by his professional duties; if, however, contrary to his expectation, any one should deem it proper to attack any part of the present work, he is hereby politely requested, to step forward after the fashion of a fair and honest

antagonist, and to follow the writer step by step, "*pede pes, densusque viro vir.*" In a word, let him oppose position to position, reason to reason, logic to logic, authority to authority, and not set about empty and vague declamation, foreign to the question, and which is only calculated to divert the attention of the reader from the main controversy at issue. If any other mode of warfare were adopted, the writer of these sheets would not deem himself bound, by any rule whatever, to reply, as he would not consider himself to be attacked, "*Hanc veniam petimusque, damusque vicissim.*" Every new position, argument, or objection, throughout the whole work, is marked with a marginal number, with a view of binding down any writer that should feel disposed to answer this work, to point out the number, which he means to attack.

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DAVIS & FORCE, PRINTERS.

UNITARIANISM

PHILOSOPHICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY EXAMINED.

NO. I.

On the first and fundamental principle on which Unitarianism is hinged: viz. "*That man cannot reasonably believe, what is above the sphere of reason; and that, of course, all mysteries are to be expunged from the code of Christianity.*"

Preliminary Remarks on the whole Unitarian System.

I. The first and most essential thing in every discussion, is to fix the state of the question with accuracy, and to ascertain with precision the principles which we mean to discuss. This I consider to be indispensably necessary in the present controversy, lest, after having gone through much trouble, we be in the end piously told, that, in the heat of our investigation, we have mistaken the meaning of the system, and, of course, said nothing to the purpose. To preclude the very possibility of a charge like this, I thought, it would not be amiss to transcribe here, word for word, the chief views of the Unitarian system, such as I find them delineated by a zealous advocate of the sect, in a late periodical publication.*

ABSTRACT OF UNITARIAN BELIEF.

1. "As Unitarians consider the Bible the only proper summary of religion, they do not profess to comprise their sentiments in any system of articles or forms of human invention. They consider the language of Scripture sufficiently plain: their creed is the Bible."

* See the Unitarian Miscellany and Christian Monitor, No. I, pages 9—20, published in Baltimore, by J. Webster.

2. "Unitarians believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New-Testament, contain authentic records of the dispensations of God, and of his revelations to men: we think the evidence of the truth, and divine authority of these books, to be abundant and convincing."

3. "We believe that the revealed truths of the Scriptures are in conformity with the principles of right reason, and consistent with one another. We hold it to be impossible, in the nature of things, that any truth, which God has revealed, should be irrational or contradictory among themselves." Without proceeding on the principle, that the Scriptures have every where a consistent and *intelligible* meaning, it is no wonder, the inquirer is perplexed with mysteries, absurdities, and contradictions.

4. "Unitarians believe one of the great doctrines taught in the Scriptures to be the *unity and supremacy of God. Our reason tells us, that there can be but one God: the Father.*"*

5. "Unitarians believe, that Jesus Christ was a messenger commissioned from heaven to make a revelation, and communicate the will of God to men. They agree that he was not God, that he was a distinct being from the Father, and subordinate to him; and that he received from the Father all his power, wisdom, and knowledge. They believe Christ to have been authorized and empowered to make a divine revelation to the world. We believe in the divinity of his mission, but not of his person. We consider all, that he has taught, as coming from God; but we do not pay him religious homage, because we think, that this would be derogating from the honour of the Supreme Being."

6. "Unitarians believe that Christ was one Being, and that he possessed one mind, one will, one consciousness. We maintain that two natures, that of God, and that of man, must necessarily make two Beings. The notion, that two natures can constitute one person, we take to be unintelligible and absurd."

* The Unit. Miscellany and Christ. Monitor, No. 1, p. 2.

7. " We believe the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, was the spirit of God, and not a person, or being, or substance distinct from God."

8. " We have only room to state, that we do not believe the guilt of Adam's sin was imputed, and his corrupted nature conveyed, to all his posterity, or that there is in men any original corruption. This doctrine makes God the author of sin, and the punisher of crimes, in men, which he has rendered it impossible, they should not commit."

9. " We do not believe that Christ has once offered himself up a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and *reconcile* us to God; because this is making the innocent suffer for the guilty, and appeasing the wrath of a Being, who, in his very nature, is necessarily benevolent, merciful, and good."

10. " We believe men have, in themselves, the power of being good or bad, of meriting the rewards, or deserving the punishments, of a just God."

11. Such are the prominent features of Unitarianism. "We well know, says the above writer, that the more Unitarianism is examined, the more it will be approved. We wish to have it submitted to the understanding of every one; we wish to have it encountered by fair argument, and canvassed by open discussion: this is one of the best modes of proving its truths." A declaration like this does much honour to the professors of the system, as it betrays, on their part, a strong confidence in the truth of their principles, and a candid desire, that it be fully known to all mankind. From this unfeigned declaration I inferred, that it would prove as gratifying to the Unitarians, as to Christians at large, were any one to undertake the task, of " encountering it by fair argument, and of canvassing it by open discussion." It is under these impressions, that the present work has been undertaken, in which it is intended to pass in review, the said principles one after another, and to investigate, whether they are as consonant to sound reason, and to the Unitarian creed, " the Bible," as Unitarians seem to believe, and whether they can stand the test of good logic. The impartial reader will decide on the result of our undertaking.

III. Before I enter upon the subject, I must be permitted to make a general reflection, and it is this, that it would be no small error to imagine, that Unitarianism is a new system, a masterpiece of the astonishing improvement of the human intellect: for it is a fact, that this sect has not even the merit of invention or novelty, (if novelty, in matters of religion, can be called merit,) and that it has existed before either my reader or I were thought of in the world: for in running over the above sketch of the Unitarian doctrines, it is obvious, that Unitarianism is, with very little shades of difference, nothing more than a revival of ancient heresies, which, (even in the Apostolic age,) began to break out, and which, at that time, were boasted of, not unlike the said system, as wonderful improvements of the human mind, because devised by the very same grand principle, on which the Unitarian builds his system, I mean, *reason*. For the truth of what I am here advancing, the reader has nothing else to do, than to turn to the account, which the primitive Fathers of the church, and, among others, Tertullian, St. Irenæus, and St. Epiphanius, have left us of the errors of the Simonians, Cerinthians, the Ebionites, the Valentinians, &c. &c. and there he will find, that most of those heretics rejected the very same mysteries of religion which the Unitarians reject, and on the very same ground, too, on which the Unitarians do, viz: because they appeared *unintelligible* to their understanding. Arius, in the third century, denied the divinity of Jesus Christ; Eunomius, in the following century, the divinity of the Holy Ghost; Pelagius, the existence of Original Sin and of Supernatural Grace; Eutyches, the distinction of the two Natures, or two Wills, in Christ, and so on; and when all these opinions had long since been forgotten, Socinus, in the sixteenth century, arose to amalgamate them all into one body, and to obtrude them on his followers as the most rational and consistent creed of the reformation: his system was exactly that of the Unitarians: his grand principle, (and such is the Unitarian's,) was, that, whatever is unintelligible to human reason, is to be rejected: rejected, of course, were all those mysteries which the Unita-

rians reject: and when Socinianism itself had nearly vanished away, the dying sparks of this expiring sect were caught by the British infidels and French sophisters, who undertook, (with what success, the world well knows,) to shake the foundations of Christianity itself by the very same engines of sophistry, which, both Socinus and the Unitarians make use of to erase from the divine system of Jesus Christ the above mysteries, which are its very basis and ground work.

IV. There is another reflection which must naturally offer itself to every reflecting mind, and which will ever form a strong and almost insuperable presumption against the Unitarian system. "Is it possible, (it is thus, that every sober man will reason with himself,) is it possible, that the whole Christian world, for the space of not less than eighteen hundred years, should have been involved in more than Egyptian darkness, in the grossest idolatry, in adoring a mere man as the true God? Is it possible that Jesus Christ, 'the Divine Messenger of the Father, authorized and empowered to make a Divine Revelation to the world,' should have so utterly forgotten his solemn promises to his Church,* and, contrary to them, should have permitted her to fall into a worse kind of idolatry than that, from which he came to rescue mankind? What, on that supposition, must we think of Jesus Christ himself? What of his wisdom, of his veracity, of his fidelity in keeping his promises? Is it possible, that Christ suffered millions of martyrs to be butchered for the sake of an idolatrous worship? Is it possible that a handful of men, men of yesterday, men, who are neither Saints nor Thaumaturguses, should, within the eighteenth century, be better informed of the Divine Religion of Jesus Christ, and of the true meaning of the Scriptures, than the Church of God, instructed by the Apostles and their immediate successors? Is it possible, that these few men can be wiser than the whole Christian world; wiser than the glorious Martyrs; wiser than the Holy Fathers, those prodi-

* St. Matthew, xviii. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her." And St. Matt. xxviii. "And behold! I am with you, all days, even to the end of the world."

gies of learning as well as of sanctity; wiser than those eighteen venerable Assemblies in which the whole Church of Christ was collected?" Any man, capable of reflection will readily answer in the words of the Roman bard, "*Credat Judæus Apella, non ego.*" "*Apella, the Jew, may believe this, but not I.*"

But stop, may say the Unitarian, this is not yet touching the question: to do any thing to the purpose, you must be able to show, by fair argument, that our doctrine is false, inconsistent with scripture and reason, and, of course, inadmissible.

Perfectly right: let us, therefore, come directly to the point, and, in order to proceed methodically, let us proceed to the grand principle, on which the whole structure of the Unitarian system is hinged. "Man cannot reasonably believe what is above the sphere of reason; and, of course, all mysteries are to be expunged from the code of Christianity."

As this principle is all-important, and, as essential to the establishment of their system, as the foundations are to an edifice, it is, in the nature of things, to expect that they will fight for it as "*pro aris et focis,*" conscious as they are to themselves, that, if this one principle be overthrown, Unitarianism must needs fall, and Christianity triumph; the reader must, therefore, be prepared to encounter all, that human ingenuity and philosophic wit could possibly invent in support of a principle which is the *primum mobile*, and the *conditio, sine qua non*, of the Unitarian cause. Their process of reasoning on this subject, like an impregnable battery, is found in the following syllogism:

V. "The Scriptures, being expressly intended for our instruction, edification, rule of life, and means of happiness, must have every where a consistent and intelligible meaning."* *Unitarian major.*

But the mysteries of original sin, of the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ, of the Trinity, of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, the necessity of

* See the above Abstract of Unitarian Belief.

supernatural grace, are unintelligible to the human understanding: *Unitarian minor.*

Therefore they are not revealed in the Scriptures, and, of course are not to be believed. *Unitarian conclusion.*

If the major proposition be correct, Unitarianism triumphs: if false and groundless, Unitarianism must needs be crushed under its ruins. Acquainted as we are with the position and ground, which the enemy has taken, let us try, if we cannot storm his batteries and drive him out of his entrenchments. In reconnoitering the place, it will require, methinks, no great degree of learning, to make it appear to the most ordinary capacity, that the above *major proposition*, understood in the sense and meaning of the Unitarian system, is utterly false, irrational, and absurd.

VI. Before I proceed to my demonstration, it is proper, for the sake of avoiding confusion, clearly to state the point in question between the Unitarians and the Christians: for, if by the position, "The Scriptures must have every where an *intelligible meaning*," nothing more is meant, than, that God in the Scriptures is to speak to men after such a manner, and in such language, as to make them sufficiently understand what he has revealed and what they are to believe, without, however, giving them a right to dive into the intrinsic nature of the revelation; after nearly the same manner, as a servant has a right to know clearly the commands of his master, (as otherwise he could not comply with them,) without having a right to know the reasons which his master may have to impose them on him; if, I say, no more is meant than this, the Unitarian will speak plain, good sense, and the whole world will agree with him: for, it is obvious, that, unless men have some idea of what God reveals, they cannot be bound to believe it. But if this principle, "the Scriptures must have every where an intelligible meaning," is understood to imply, that men have a right to examine the very intrinsic nature of the object revealed, to compare it with the natural ideas of their reason, and that, if found to be *unintelligible*, this alone is a sufficient reason to reject that *mysterious and unintelligi-*

ble meaning, and, of course, all divine mysteries, which are essentially incomprehensible to human reason; the position, thus understood, is utterly false, irrational, and absurd.

I do not presume, that any Unitarian will call it in question, whether this latter meaning be the identical position of the Unitarian creed: for this is undeniable, from the very abstract of the Unitarian belief above quoted; next, from all the writers that have stept forward in vindication of that belief; and, in fine, from the total rejection of all mysteries, which the Unitarians reject, on no other ground, but, because they are unintelligible to their understandings.*

* Since the known enemies of Christianity, such as Bolingbroke, Hobbes, Shaftsbury, Toland, Bayle, Voltaire, Rousseau, Thomas Paine, &c. &c. have always considered this principle, "Men cannot reasonably believe, what they cannot comprehend," or, what is nearly tantamount, "What is above reason, is against reason," as the most powerful engine against Revelation, we need not be surprised when we find our Unitarian friends utterly averse from acknowledging, that they have adopted the said principles. But let Mr. Sparks, (minister of the First Independent Church of Baltimore,) in his sixth Letter to the Rev. William E. Wyatt, D. D. page 200—202, and his other Unitarian friends, *openly* disclaim the adoption of the above maxims, as long as they please, still it will not be less a fact, to any one that is conversant with their writings, that the principles under consideration are, in reality, the very basis, of the whole Unitarian system. The reader will scarce have perused a page, either in Mr. Sparks' Letters, or in the Christian Disciple, or in the Unitarian Miscellany, when he will be made sensible, that, in the Unitarian language, *unintelligible*, *absurd*, *irrational*, *inconsistent*, and *contradictory*, are all synonymous expressions; and that *mysteries* and *absurdities*, *inconsistencies*, *contradictions*, signify one and the same thing. The same is clearly apparent from their mode of investigating the mysteries; for, instead of inquiring into the motives of extrinsic credibility, as reason directs, when we set about to ascertain Divine Revelation; or, instead of inquiring, whether God has actually revealed them or not, they, on the contrary, follow a method quite the reverse: their first and only care being, not to examine whether God has actually revealed them, and whether, of course, they are to be believed without further ado, whether intelligible to reason, or unintelligible, but to examine into the intrinsic nature of the mysteries, in order to discover, whether they be concordant with the natural ideas of reason, or, what is the same, whether they be intelligible to reason, and, in case they are not, as it always falls out in mysteries, they are sure, to reject them as *inconsistencies*, *absurdities*, *contradictions*, *irrational notions*, for no other reason, but, because reason cannot comprehend them. What is said here, shall be substantiated, if necessary by copious extracts from Unitarian productions.

The meaning of the principle being thus clearly stated, let us come to the point under consideration. In order to maintain that "the Scriptures must have every where an intelligible meaning," that is to say, a meaning void of mystery, and such as reason may penetrate, the Unitarian must needs suppose, that either God has no right to reveal mysteries impervious to reason, and to exact from men the tribute of their implicit belief in those mysteries; or, if, absolutely speaking, he has a right to do this, still, it is not consistent with, or worthy of, his wisdom, to do so; or, in fine, that it is repugnant to the very nature of the human understanding, and derogatory to its dignity, to believe what is above it, or what it cannot conceive. Now, I maintain, that these three suppositions are equally untenable; therefore, the Scriptures may have a meaning unintelligible to the human mind, a mysterious meaning, a meaning above the reach of reason, and such as reason cannot fathom.

SECTION I.

VII. *God has a right to reveal to men impenetrable mysteries, and to exact from them an implicit belief in the same.*

And how can this be, asks the Unitarian, and how can God require, that a rational being should believe, what he cannot conceive?

The Unitarian will permit me to reply, with equal freedom, and, I trust, with reason on my side. And who are you, (so I would argue with my Unitarian friend,) who are you, a little being of yesterday, that you dare dispute the rights, which your God has over you? Who are you, who presume to call your master to an account for his conduct towards you, and to set limits to the infinite claims which he essentially possesses over the whole creation? Who are you, who pretend to prescribe laws to your God, respecting what he is to exact of you, and what not? What! you have the audacity to say to the Sovereign Lord of the universe, "Thus far thou

shalt come and no further:"* thou hast a right to reveal to me what I can conceive, and nothing more: thy oracles shall be respected when approved at the tribunal of my reason, and disregarded when above my understanding. What language! It is your's, when you deny your God the right of revealing mysteries to men.

Whence do you come? Who made you all that you are? Is it not God? Are you not, therefore, born his servant? Are you not, essentially and perpetually, depending on him, as the only author of your existence, both as to body and soul? Are you not the work of his hands, and has he not, therefore, an infinite right over your whole being, over all your faculties, corporeal as well as intellectual? Is it not, therefore, his province to dictate to you, not your's to dictate to him, how and after what manner you are to worship him? Is not God, in virtue of your creation, your sovereign master, and does not reason dictate, that it belongs to the master to command, and to the servant to obey?† Does the vessel say to the potter, Why hast thou made me so? Has not the potter an indisputable right to do with his vessel, the work of his hands, what he pleases, and to employ it for whatever use he thinks proper, and that for this very reason, because he has made it? How much more, are you and I under the infinite control of our common Maker, and how much more right has he, to dispose of us, at his divine pleasure, than the potter can have to dispose of the work of his hands, and to exact from us such a determinate kind of worship, and no other; to demand, in fine, that we should not only honour his infinite dominion, by a perfect submission of our will to his divine

* "Usque huc procedes, et non amplius." Job.

† St. Paul's Epist. ad Rom. ix. ver. 20 et seq. "O, man, who art thou, that thou repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Or has not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" And Isaiah, ch. x. ver. 15, "Shall the axe boast itself against him, that cutteth with it or shall the saw exalt itself against him, by whom it is drawn? As if a rod should lift itself up against him that lifteth it up, and a staff exalt itself, which is but wood."

commands, but also his infinite veracity, in captivating our understanding to the belief of mysteries which we cannot comprehend ?*

VIII. But, continues the Unitarian, why should I be bound to believe that, of which I do not conceive the reason? Would not this look like blind stupidity ?

Why ? Because God is your master, and you are his servant: he is not obliged to tell you the reasons, he has to enjoin you such and such orders: or, let me ask you, would you put up with the insolence of a servant, who would unceremoniously tell you, that he is determined not to obey you, for no other reason, than because he cannot conceive the motives you may have for giving him such a command ? What would be your reply to such a servant? You, no doubt, would check his effrontery, and answer: I am, your master, you are my servant: it is my business, not your's, to know the reasons for which I command you to do this or that: do your duty and ask no more. Now, who has greater claims, God over his creature, or you a mortal man, over your servant? Who is more a servant, you to God, or your servant to you? How much more right, then, has your Maker to oblige you to adore and to bow down to the unfathomable mysteries of his wisdom, although he does not give you his reasons for doing so? Are you not, therefore, a worse rebel against your God than your insolent servant is against you, when you with so much presumption dare reject the mysteries of revelation, for no other reason than because you cannot fathom them? Again, suppose, your son were to tell you: I will not obey you, sir, because I cannot conceive the reason, why you command this; your command appears to me irrational, because unintelligible to my mind: Do you think that such reasoning would be correct and admissible in your child? And still this is your language to your God, when you, who are but a little child when compared to

* 1 Corinth. ch. x. ver. 5. "And every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every understanding to the obedience of Christ."

the infinite wisdom and knowledge of God, dare say: *I will not believe what God reveals to me, because I cannot understand it.*

SECTION 2.

IX. *If God cannot reveal mysteries to men, then God cannot communicate himself, at all, to them; and if man cannnot reasonably believe what is above the sphere of his reason, he can believe nothing.*

The Unitarian asks the question: How can God, the sovereign reason, reveal to reason what is unintelligible to reason? Would not this seem to imply a strange absurdity?

My answer is this: If God cannot do this, then you must, at once, deny the very possibility on the part of God of communicating himself to men; you must adopt the impious paradox, that it is out of the power of God, to make known to men any thing, that has a relation to his divine nature, and to his ineffable perfections; for God is essentially infinite and incomprehensible, and, of course, essentially unintelligible, not only to human reason, but to all created understandings. Now, sir, permit me, to assure you, that, of the whole unhallowed host of ancient and modern infidels, there was scarce ever any that would dare go to such lengths.

What has been hitherto advanced against the principle, which we are here discussing, admits, it would seem, of no solution, because our reasoning till now, rests altogether on the very nature of things, and on the immutable attributes of the Deity itself. Still our Unitarian friend, is far from being converted, and appears to be determined not to believe mysteries, because he conceives it derogatory to the dignity of a rational being to believe what he cannot conceive.

X. Is it then true, is it correct to assert, that the belief of mysteries is degrading to the dignity of a rational being? To any one that would be under this impression, I would simply reply: You cannot believe what you cannot comprehend; then, sir, believe nothing at all, nothing of what you see, nothing of what is within you; believe not your very existence, and, to complete your Unitarian creed, believe not

the very existence of the God who made you, for of all this you understand nothing.*

I say, first, that you understand nothing of what you see: this world, which you inhabit, and of which you are a component part, is incessantly exposed to your view; it exists: you can no more doubt of its existence than of your own; still I maintain that you cannot comprehend how its exists: for, permit me to ask you, is it very intelligible to your reason, how the world, being not as yet in existence, and being as yet nothing both as to matter and to form; how, I say, the world issued out of nothing into existence, at the very first nod of its omnipotent Maker? Do you conceive, Sir, how, in one instant, and by one act of his divine will, God made the heavens, the earth, the seas, with all that they contain? No, Sir, you have no idea of the creative power, and the infinite efficacy of the will of God. It is not given to a created understanding to conceive the necessary relation that exsists between the eternal act, by which God decreed, that the world should exist in time, and its actual existence: you cannot comprehend, how, in virtue of these two words, "*fiat lux*," "let there be light," the light was: and as you cannot conceive this, you must, of course, deny the very existence of the world, of the light, and other creatures. You conceive not how the world exists: let us see now if you have a better conception of the laws by which it is governed.

The world, says the Scripture,† which God made, as it were, in sport, is a problem which he has set up to men. This problem, Sir, has never as yet been solved, nor will it ever be.

* Lest Mr. J. Sparks should be tempted to affix to his phrase the same incongruous meaning, which he attached to nearly a similar sentence of Mr. William Burg. J. Sparks' vi. letter, page 203. I thought proper to determine the meaning of the above assertion. By the above expression, therefore, the author means not, that we can have no idea at all of the objects under consideration, for this would be absurd; but, that we can have no more idea of the mode or of the intrinsic nature of those objects than we have of mysteries.

† Ecclesiastes, 3. v. 11. "He has delivered the world to their consideration, so that man cannot find out the work, which God has made from the beginning to the end."

has nothing to do with perishable food. Is it your body? but your body has neither reason nor feeling of its nature. Is it chance? but how can chance (a word invented to cover our ignorance,) be the author of so admirable a work, of such constant and uniform operations? You do not comprehend this wonder, and because you do not, is it less true, less real? Could you explain to me, Sir, how one and the same moisture of the earth, insipid as it is, tasteless, and without any smell or colour whatever, can bring forth such an infinite variety of plants, of herbs, of flowers and fruits, as various and different in their shape, size, colours, taste and smell, as the faces of men are from each other? Can you explain, how the same simple and apparently insignificant cause can produce such an enchanting and variegated scenery, as your garden or your verdant meadow exhibits? It is a mystery to you and to me, and yet neither of us doubts the fact.

Lastly, have you sagacity enough to inform me, by what magic art it happens, that by opening your eyes, the immense expanse of the skies is suddenly depicted, in most distinct and lively colours, in the retina of your eye, which is not bigger than the head of a pin? To form that admirable miniature in your optick nerve, and to embrace, as it were, the immensity of the heavens in so imperceptible a space, it is necessary, that, from every sensible point of the firmament, a ray should come to strike the retina: Well, is it very easy for you to conceive, how such an infinity of rays, parting at once, from all the points of the heavens, can meet in so small a focus, without being thrown into confusion, and retrace in one instant in your eye, a landscape as distinct as delightful of the majesty of the heavens? Reason can admire this wonder, but never comprehend it: still you believe it, and in doing so, you follow the very dictates of your reason: it is therefore reasonable, at times, to believe, even what we cannot conceive.

By this time we might with reason expect to find, our Unitarian friend more inclined to give up the principle under consideration, since he cannot but see to what strange straits it

reduces him. But, as this principle is the *cardo rei*, on which the whole system turns, he cannot prevail upon himself to relinquish it.

If so, then willing, or unwilling, he must needs launch out into downright atheism, and say with the impious: *Non est Deus, there is no God.* Psalm, xxx. v. 1. He shudders at the idea of denying that God, who made him: but still reason will force him to admit this horrid consequence, as long as he insists on the unhallowed principle; for, is there any thing more unintelligible, more incomprehensible, more above all created understanding, than God? Is not incomprehensibility the most prominent attribute not only of God himself, but also of all his works?* Can the Unitarian comprehend a Being, that has neither beginning nor end, and that lives throughout all eternity? Can he conceive, how, by the omnipotent act of his will, he can create myriads of worlds, and annihilate them with as much facility as he called them forth from nought? Can he conceive, how a being can be, at once, infinitely free and still be essentially immutable and unchangeable? How a being can be present in all places, whole and entire, and co-exist whole and entire, in every point of space, and yet be infinitely simple and essentially indivisible? If he could comprehend this, he would be God himself, because he would possess an infinite intellect: he, therefore, cannot comprehend God, and yet there is a God: either, therefore, he must renounce his principle, and with it, Unitarianism, or his creed will be simply this: '*there is no God.*' Unitarianism and Atheism will be synonymous terms.

XII. It is quite natural to expect, that we should be interrupted by our Unitarian friend, at this last conclusion, and that we should be candidly told, that our logic carries us too far, and that, in fine, to be called "*Deists in disguise*," as they have

* Job, xi. "Peradventure thou wilt comprehend the steps of God, and find out the Almighty perfectly? He is higher than heaven, and what wilt thou do? He is deeper than hell, and how wilt thou know? The measure of him is higher than the earth, and broader than the sea: if he shall overturn all things, or shall press them together, who shall contradict him?"

Each philosopher took it into his head to build a world of his own, but all these worlds tumbled down like so many edifices built on the sand. Will you succeed better in withdrawing the sacred veil of the unsearchable conduct of God in the government of this universe? Alas! how should we be able to comprehend the world, weak mortals as we are, since the least and most insignificant of the objects, that compose it, far exceeds our intelligence? Pray, Sir, what are those beams which enlighten us? What that air which we breathe? What the earth which supports us? These are so many mysteries, to you, to me, and to all mankind. Here, Sir, is a drop of water, a grain of sand, a blade of grass: you see that I do not mean to embarrass you, and that I seize, as it were by chance, whatever falls under my hand: tell me, Sir, what is that drop of water, that grain of sand, that blade of grass? Make me comprehend, if you can, its intrinsic nature, and all its properties; enable me to say: I comprehend this drop of water, this grain of sand, this slender herb. Would you have an age to work and to reflect upon these mighty objects? Would you have two ages? Would you have a thousand? Agreed, Sir, you shall have them, and still I defy you to succeed; and I bid the same defiance to the whole body of the philosophical school.* It is then true, Sir, that you conceive nothing of what you behold with your eyes; what then will it be, if I force you to confess, that you do not conceive even yourself, nor any thing of what is within you?

Are you ready, Sir, to inform me, how your body was framed in the womb of your mother?† How your soul entered into your body? How these two beings, so disproportionate in their nature, so seemingly opposed to each other, could

* "The judicious reflections of one of the greatest astronomers of the last age, is worthy of notice: "Hinc oritur illa animorum in indagandis rebus naturæ perplexitas, mentisq; stupor, quo perculsa, quanto in intima rerum indagine plus se profecisse ratio videt, tanto a veritatis limine remotiorem adhuc se esse deprehendit." Kirker, M. S.

† Lib. 2, Machab. vii. v. 22. "She, (the mother of the Machabees) said to them: I know not how you were formed in my womb, for I neither gave you breath, nor soul, nor life; neither did I frame the limbs of every one of you, but the Creator of the world, that formed the nativity of man," &c.

unite so closely as to constitute one and the same whole? what is your soul? Where is it? How does it subsist? By what sort of tie is it united to the body? Is that tie spiritual, or corporeal; and, in either case, how can it affect either of the two substances? How can your soul command your hand or foot, which, being of their own nature, without sense or feeling, cannot understand its orders? How does your soul put in motion the nerves and muscles, which it knows not? How did your tongue, a mere lump of flesh, learn the astonishing art of beating the air to such advantage, as to form the most rapturous concerts, and to convey, by the distinct articulation of its sounds, your most secret thoughts to my mind? You possess the faculty of thinking; What is thought, Sir? At one time you feel pleasure, and at another pain: What is pleasure, what is pain? Your eye sees colours: Why does your eye see? What are the colours which it sees? What do you know of all this? Why, no more than what the most stupid know, that is to say, nothing, nothing at all: And still you exist, Sir, and you never doubted of the existence of what surrounds you: therefore, not to comprehend, is not always a reason not to believe. What! the world is a mystery to you: every creature that composes it, is a mystery to you: You are yourself, a mystery to yourself, and you pretend to comprehend that supreme and eternal majesty that made the world, and that drew you out of nothing?*

Did you ever take notice, Sir, of that wonderful stillatory which is within you, by which the nourishment, you daily take, is converted, some into your blood, some into flesh, some into bones, some into chyle, &c.? Could you explain to me the secret of this astonishing mechanism, and who he is that presides over it?† Is it the soul? but your soul is spiritual, and

* Prov. xxv. v. 27. "He that is a seacher of majesty, shall be overwhelmed with glory." And Book of Wisdom, ix. v. 16. "And hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth: and with labour do we find the things that are before us. But the things that are in heaven, who shall search out?"

† St. Chrysostom de incomp. Dei nat. "Cibos comedo, quo pacto autem dividantur in petuitam, sanguinem, humorem, ignoro. Hæc, quæ quotidie comedentes videmus, ignoramus tamen; et Dei substantiam curiose scrutamur."

been termed by some, is sufficiently illiberal, but, to be styled *Atheists*, is not to be borne with. To this, I answer, that it is far from me to fix this most odious appellation upon any professor of Unitarianism; nay, I should not do justice to my own feelings, were I not solemnly to declare, that I conceive them to have as great an abhorrence of this last link of human depravity, as I myself do feel. I have already remarked, that I have nothing to do with personalities, but with principles only, and I still maintain, that, consistent with them, the Unitarians must turn out real Atheists, or bad reasoners. Their principles, by a necessary connection, lead to the denial of God. If, then, they do not admit this horrid consequence, they, indeed, will not be Atheists, but they will be inconsistent logicians.*

* It is a subject of surprise to the writer of these tracts, to see the Unitarians repel with so much indignation the appellation of *Deists*, and to think themselves unjustly dealt with, when they are denied the name of christians. For, if the definition of the Unitarian sect, given by a most venerable character, in a letter published with his permission in a Unitarian periodical review,* be correct, then assuredly they cannot, with any appearance of reason, lay claim to the name of Christians, nor term it illiberality, when they are styled by their proper name, *Deists*. The definition of the Unitarian church, given in the letter alluded to, runs thus, "There is, my dear Doctor, at present, existing in the world, a church philosophic .... The philosophic church was originally English. Voltaire learned it from Lord Herbert, Hobbes, Morgan, Collins, Shaftesbury, Bolinbroke, &c. You may depend upon it, your exertions will promote the Church Philosophic, more than the Church Athanasian, or Presbyterian." Assuredly, a Philosophic Church, a Church established by the English Apostles of Infidelity, and propagated by the Patriarch of Incredulity, throughout France and the rest of Europe, cannot, with any appearance of good sense, be called any other than the *Church of Deists*.

And, what is still more to the purpose, have not the public, since they have been made acquainted with the strange correspondence of the Unitarians of England, with the ambassador of the mighty Emperor of Fez and Morocco, good reasons to doubt, whether our Unitarian friends themselves set much value on the name of Christian? Men, who hesitate not heartily to salute and congratulate the followers of the Asiatic Impostor Mahomet, as *votaries and fellow worshippers*; who style themselves *as their nearest fellow champions*; who profess, that the Supreme God has raised Mahomet to defend the faith of

* See the Christian Disciple, No. 1, v. 3. page 43, 44.

XIII. Before we proceed further, it is proper to take notice of an apparently plausible objection, that may be made against what has been said in this paragraph, but which, if properly examined, will turn greatly to our advantage, and throw new light on the matter before us. The Unitarian might say: you have done your best to convince the public, by a variety of instances, that reason itself obliges us to believe what we cannot comprehend, and that, of course, the incomprehensibility of mysteries, is, of itself alone, not a sufficient reason for rejecting them; but you will permit me to observe, that there appears to be a vast difference between the cases adduced above, and mysteries.

To this I reply, that, if there be any, let it be pointed out. Here it is, says the Unitarian: It is true, sir, that I cannot conceive, how this world could or should rush into existence, by the simple act of the will of God, but after all, I behold this world, I dwell in it, I enjoy it, and its existence incessantly strikes all my senses. I must agree, likewise, that I do not know the very essence and intrinsic nature of any of the beings that compose the world: but I am constantly environed by them: they are before my eyes, and under my hands: they are subservient to all my wants and conveniences. I am, too, I must confess, in deep darkness as to the nature of my own being, as well as to what passes within myself, but I am con-

one Supreme God, *with the sword as a scourge on those idolizing Christians*; Men, who seem so much concerned for *Mahomet's glory*; men of that character, who so openly court the friendship and fellowship in faith with the sworn enemies of the Christian name, leave, assuredly, serious doubts on the public mind, whether they value themselves much for the title of a Christian.

The authority of the above correspondence is set beyond the possibility of a doubt, in the very interesting pamphlet published by the Rev. Henry J. Feltus, Rector of St. Stephen's Church. N. Y. under the following title: *Historical Documents and Critical Remarks on Unitarianism and Mahometanism, printed by W. A Mercein*, 1820. The same Rev. Author makes it appear, from unquestionable authority, that "Mahometanism, in many respects, has much stronger claims to orthodox Christianity, than Unitarianism; and that the Mahometans have much more exalted sentiments of Jesus Christ, than the Unitarians have. *See the Tract just quoted.*

scious of my own being and of its modifications. In a word, I have no intimate or adequate knowledge of any of these things, but, to supply this want of adequate and intuitive knowledge, I have proofs of fact, proofs of sentiment, proofs of experience, and these more than suffice me. Let any one produce me such or like proofs in support of the mystery of the Trinity, or of any other mystery, and I am ready to believe them.

This reflection does honour to the understanding of our opponent; it is that of a man of good sense; and, in consequence of it, I to assure him, that if he be sincere, before long we shall perfectly agree in our belief. He will believe the mystery of the Trinity, and all other mysteries as firmly as I do, and though he smiles, I shall proceed to my demonstration, and reason thus:

You grant, and you cannot but grant, that the mystery of the Trinity, is simply incomprehensible. You agree, likewise, that there is a variety of things, which are unintelligible to us, and which, nevertheless, we are forced to believe, because, if, on the one hand we cannot conceive the possibility of them, we have, on the other, certain proofs of their existence: it is on these two grounds you promise to believe in the mystery of the Trinity, for instance, how incomprehensible soever it may be, if I am able to afford you certain proofs of the said mystery. Well, sir, I am going to give you a certain and infallible proof of the existence of the mystery of the Trinity; a proof which is equivalent to a direct demonstration.—Here is my proof: Are you not convinced, that God is to be believed by men upon the unerring authority of his own testimony, respecting his own nature, his own Being, his manner of existing, and in fine, his own works? Assuredly, you are convinced of this principle; for, in order to deny it, you must needs suppose, either that God does not know himself or his own works, which would be a horrible blasphemy; or, that God may give a false evidence to men respecting his own nature, or that of his works, which would be a blasphemy still more horrid; or, in fine, that men, although convinced of the infinite veracity of God, have, notwithstanding, a right, not to ad-

mit the evidence, which God gives concerning his own nature, or his own works, unless he give them clear and intuitive ideas of the objects revealed, and unless he make them clearly understand them—which would be, at once, the height of impiety, and the last degree of folly.

But now, God has declared to men, in the most authentic form, *that he exists in three persons, perfectly distinct, in a perfect unity of essence, nature, or substance;* therefore, you ought to believe this mystery, how incomprehensible soever it may be, after the same manner as you believe your own existence, or that of the world, because, although you have no intrinsic or intuitive evidence of either, still you have other extrinsic irresistible proofs of the said truths. The irrefragable arguments, in support of this mystery, will form the matter for a distinct number.

SECTION III.

XV. *The assertion, that the mysteries of Religion involve contradiction, is itself a contradiction in the very terms.*

Is there not a manifest contradiction, says the Unitarian, in the mystery of the Trinity? How can one, for instance, be three, and three be one?

To this sophism, borrowed from the school of incredulity, we answer thus:

One can be three and three can be one, after the same manner nearly, (without pretending, however, to exact comparison, which is not to be found in created things,) as our soul, considered in its nature as a spiritual substance, is essentially one, and, at the same time, essentially three, when considered as to its powers, *memory*, *understanding*, and *free will*. These three powers subsist in one and the same individual soul, and partake of its nature, and yet, when viewed in their formal capacity, and their peculiar operations, they are distinct from each other; for he, that simply remembers, cannot be truly said to reason or to will, any more than he, that simply wills, can be said either to remember or to reason. Or, to

use a more familiar comparison, our Congressmen are at once, *many* and *one*; *many*, when considered in their individual capacity—*one*, when considered as a legislative body: as such, they constitute one indivisible government, and possess one common and indivisible power. Thus, you see, sir, that the same thing may, at once, be *one* and *many*—*one*, in one respect, and *many*, in another: and this is exactly the case with regard to the Trinity, in which there is *Unity* and *Trinity*—*Unity* in nature or substance, and *Trinity* in persons. There is, therefore, no contradiction.

What then, sir, will be absurd, continues the Unitarian, if this mystery be not so?

My answer is: It will be your mode of reasoning; for you suppose a contradiction where it is impossible to discover any, for the very reason, that this mystery is above your comprehension.

How is it impossible, (you will ask,) to discover a contradiction in the Trinity, or any other mystery?

To make my answer as plain as possible, we must distinguish three kinds of propositions: *evident* propositions, *absurd* and *contradictory* propositions, and *incomprehensible* propositions. A proposition is *evident*, when the mind clearly perceives, that the two ideas, of which it is composed, agree with each other, and are, to use the very terms of the school, identified. Such are these propositions: *God is good: God is just: the whole is greater than any of its parts, severally taken.* A proposition is *absurd* and *contradictory*, when the mind clearly perceives, that the two ideas, of which it is composed, are jarring with one another, and mutually exclude each other. Such are these propositions: *God is unjust: the part is greater than, or equal to, the whole.* A proposition is *incomprehensible*, when it is impossible for the mind to discover the accord, or identity, of the two ideas that compose it. Such are these propositions: *A being that has never existed, may receive existence. A being that is in existence, may return to nought.* Such would likewise certainly be for you and for me, this proposition, if we had always been out of this world

and out of our bodies: *A being composed of a soul and a body, is possible.*

Now, it is no more in our power to give our assent to an absurd and contradictory proposition, than to refuse it to an evident one. As to propositions which are simply incomprehensible, two things are certain: the first is, that we are not obliged to admit such propositions as true, unless we have proofs elsewhere of the truth of them, equivalent to intrinsic evidence, which is wanting. The second is, that we have no right to deny them, absolutely, unless, in want of intrinsic evidence of their falsity, we derive elsewhere certain proofs of their falsehood. The reason of this is obvious: for who does not see, that, because we do not perceive how two ideas agree, and are identified with each other, it does not follow, that they are contradictory to each other, or that they destroy each other? And, likewise, because we do not perceive that two ideas oppose and exclude each other, it does not follow, that they are compatible and identified with each other. Now, I maintain, that this proposition: *there exists one God in three distinct persons*, or any other proposition relating to mysteries of faith, are propositions of the third kind, that is to say, propositions simply incomprehensible, which, of course, you cannot absolutely deny, unless you have proofs elsewhere that they are false; nor can you help admitting them, when, in defect of intrinsic evidence, you have, from some other source, undoubted arguments that they are true. Were you told that "*three Gods make but one God,*" or that "*three persons make but one person,*" these two propositions would be contradictory and absurd, because either of them would join together two ideas, which manifestly exclude each other. *Three Gods and one only God:* these propositions would be of the same kind as this: "the whole is not greater than its part:" but what you are told by Christians, viz. that, "three persons make but one God," is vastly different from the above propositions; and I defy any man in the world to point out a contradiction in this, or any other like propositions, that express mysteries of faith: for contradiction sup-

poses a clear and adequate notion of the two ideas, that are joined together in a proposition, and, of course, a clear and adequate notion of the opposition or incompatibility that exists between them. Now, can the Unitarian, can any man, boast of possessing a distinct and comprehensive knowledge of what relates to mysteries? Do you, for instance, sufficiently know the intrinsic nature of the divine essence, so as to be able to pronounce with certainty, that it cannot comport with three persons? Or, have you an idea sufficiently clear of *person*, as far as it relates to the Divine Being, to affirm without fear of mistake, that three persons are repugnant to the same divine Being? Let the same be applied to all other mysteries: you assert, for instance, that original sin, and two natures in one and the same person of Jesus Christ involve contradiction. And whence do you know this? Did you ever penetrate the adorable essence of the divine nature? Do you clearly know, how far the rights of the infinite justice of God, and of his sovereign dominion, extend, in regard to man, his creature? Have you a clear idea of original sin, as far as it is propagated in the descendants of Adam, and as far as it affects them? Are you sufficiently acquainted with the divine nature, and the properties of a divine person, with their intrinsic relations and bearings, to decide with full assurance, that the two natures cannot be united in one and the same Christ? No, sir, you have not, you cannot have, in what relates to divine mysteries, a clear, distinct, and adequate idea, for the very reason, that they are above the sphere of reason. It is, of course, utterly out of your power to discover any contradiction in them.

Thus, mysteries are incomprehensible; to deny them on no other ground, but because they are incomprehensible, would be to suppose, that God cannot reveal to man what exceeds the sphere of his understanding, which is downright impiety: but when it is demonstrated, by indubitable evidence, that God has revealed them, it is both folly and irreligion to reject them. Such are the principles of Christians, principles sanctioned by reason. We Christians follow the

example of a man born blind, whom we all resemble so much, especially in things that relate to God. This blind man sees neither the skies, nor the majestic luminary which the Lord has placed therein: all, therefore, that he can say of himself, is, that he sees neither the sky nor the sun; he would be rash, were he to say any thing more, and were he to pronounce, absolutely, that there is neither sky nor sun; but when those around unite in telling him that there is a sky and a sun; that they see both, and are ravished with the spectacle presented to their view, he believes them on their word, though he has no idea of what they tell him, and he would act like a fool, were he not to believe them. Yes, were the blind man obstinately to maintain, that there is neither sky nor sun, because he does not see them himself; nor colours, because he cannot form an idea of them; you would consider him as blind in his mind as in his body. And is not this exactly the procedure of Unitarians? "*Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur.*"

SECTION IV.

XVI. *What is above reason is not always against reason.*

After all, is it not a maxim generally admitted amongst philosophers, that, "what is above reason, is against reason?"

To this anti-christian principle, I answer: If, what is above reason, is always against reason, then the existence of this universe, our own existence, and, finally, the very existence of God, are against reason; for they are certainly above reason, as has been demonstrated.

This maxim is borrowed, not from wise men, but from frantic sophisters, who, finding nothing wherewith to attack religion with success in those ancient principles, which were admitted at all times, and by all nations, and which are the common light of rational beings, and the very foundations of reason, formed the scheme of contriving arbitrary principles: from these principles they draw such inferences as they wish to draw; as it is for the very purpose of drawing

such consequences, they invented them : whence it happens, that the principle originates in the consequence, whereas the consequence ought to follow from the principle. Those sophisters proceed exactly like one that would define man to be, *an animal with two legs, and without feathers*," in order to be able to conclude, that a goose, devested of its feathers, is a man. Can there be any thing more extravagant? This, their pretended axiom is, in the main, but empty wit, which signifies nothing; for when they say that *all that is above reason is against reason*, they mean to speak either of the reason of man, or of the sovereign, uncreated, and infinite reason of God. If they mean the reason of man, this proposition is disgustingly absurd, as it is self-evident that the world presents to men an infinity of mysteries which are above reason, and which this same reason is nevertheless forced to admit: and if they mean to speak of the reason of God, this proposition is equally absurd; because they then must suppose, that there are things which are above the sovereign reason of God; a supposition the most revolting to the very first notions we have of the Supreme Being, and I must add, the most impious, as it necessarily implies, that nothing is true but what is demonstrated as such to man, that is to say, but what he can comprehend; and, of course, that what man cannot comprehend, God himself cannot comprehend.

XVII. Our Unitarian friend is not yet done: reason, says he, is one, and, of course, the reason of God and the reason of man, are not two reasons, but the same reason, and, by a necessary consequence, what is according to the reason of man, is according to the reason of God, and what is against the reason of man, is against the reason of God. This is marvellous reasoning indeed: it is exactly as if you were to say: the water of a fountain is the same as that of the ocean; the light of a ray is the same as that of the sun; therefore, with the water of a fountain, I can water and fertilize as large a tract of land, as with all the waters of the ocean; and with one ray of the sun, I can see as many objects, and as distinctly, as I can with all the light of the sun. The comparison, however, is far

from being exact; for there is some proportion between one drop of water, and all the waters of the seas; between the light of a ray of the sun, and that of the sun itself: both these objects being essentially of a limited nature—but between the reason of man, which is essentially finite, and the reason of God, which is infinite, there can be no proportion at all.

Reason is one; that is to say, that, what has been demonstrated to be true by an *evident principle*, cannot be demonstrated to be false by another *evident principle;* because principles do not contradict each other: whence it results, that faith is not contrary to reason; because for the very reason that a doctrine is evidently revealed by the God of infinite veracity, it is self-evident that it cannot be false or contrary to reason. In any other point of view, there exists an infinite difference between the reason of man and the reason of God. God knows all things; man knows almost nothing. God knows all the relations which things have to one another; man perceives but few of those relations, and scarce ever otherwise than in a confused manner. God judges infallibly of the nature of those relations in which things stand with each other: man may be mistaken, and is, indeed, often mistaken, in his judgment about the relations of the things which he knows. Thus man rushes into a thousand errors, suffers himself to be deluded by a thousand prejudices, draws at every turn false and rash inferences; in a word, man, that rational animal, is every moment at variance with reason and good sense. What then must we think, when, to use the language of the Apostle, we behold that pitiful animal insolently rising up against the infinite knowledge of God? When we see man argue with his God, and maintain that, what he has revealed, is not, or cannot be? when we see him demand of God his proofs, and solemnly protest to God, that he will not believe him, unless he see and comprehend what he reveals? Is it possible to unite so much rashness with so much weakness?*

* Let the insolent creature, who pretends to have a right to dispute with his God, and to call him to an account at the bar of his haughty reason, turn over to the 38th, 39th, 40th, and 41st chapters of the book of Job: "Then the Lord

Why, then, (so goes on our Unitarian friend,) do Christians say, that in order to believe the mysteries of religion, man must renounce his reason? If they be not against reason, why, in order to believe them, should he be obliged to give up his reason?

This objection obviously rests upon nothing but a pitiful equivocation. Christians say, that in order to believe the mysteries of religion, man must renounce, not *reason*, but *his reason;* that is to say, not the light of reason, but the *curiosity* of his reason, which claims a right to know and to fathom every thing; the *pride* of his reason, which affects a ridiculous independence; the *rashness* of his reason, which persuades him, that, what he does not comprehend and clearly conceive, cannot be true. Thus, in renouncing, not *reason*, but *my reason*, it is reason itself that guides me. How so? Because my reason dictates to me, that, as God on the one hand comprehends infinitely more things than a created being can understand; and as on the other he has a right to be believed on his sacred word in what he is pleased to reveal to men, how incomprehensible soever it be to them, the best and most noble use I can make of my reason, is that of submitting it to God's infallible oracles: the submission, therefore, with which I believe the most impenetrable mysteries, is, to use the words of the Apostle, a rational submission, *rationabile obsequium*, that is to say, a submission, for which reason itself furnishes me the motives, and motives not only probable and plausible, but altogether evident. What I believe, is ob-

answered Job out of a whirlwind, and said: Who is this that wrappeth up sentences in unskilful words? Gird up thy loins like a man: I will ask thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if thou hast understanding, who has laid the measure thereof, if thou knowest? or who has stretched the line upon it? Upon what are its bases grounded? or who laid the corner stone thereof? When the morning stars praised me together, and all the sons of God made a joyful melody? Who shut up the sea with doors, when it broke forth, as issuing out of the womb? When I made a cloud a garment thereof, and wrapped it in a mist as in swaddling bands? I set my bounds around it, and made it bars and doors; and I said, hitherto shalt thou come, and shalt go no further; and here thou shalt break thy swelling waves. Didst thou know then that thou shouldst be born, and didst thou know the number of thy days? &c. &c."

sure for me, but I see clearly that I ought to believe it. I do not see what I believe, but I know that God has revealed it; and this alone is a sufficient reason for me to believe it as firmly as if I saw it; for I am convinced that the word of God has more weight of itself alone, than all demonstrations taken together. Accordingly, when I renounce my reason, in order to believe the mysteries of religion, I renounce it because reason commands me to do so.* I make use of my reason, to examine the proofs of revelation: I discuss the facts, and compare them one with another; I ponder and appreciate the evidences; I carry every where the flambeau of the severest criticism; and when, from this investigation, it irrefragably results, that God has actually revealed to the world the mysteries of the Christian religion, I unhesitatingly determine to believe them; for it is assuredly the duty of man to listen, when God speaks; to believe, when God reveals; to adore and obey when God commands.† Is it possible to proceed

* "The more I endeavour to contemplate the infinite essence of God," says one of the brightest geniuses of the past age, "the less I conceive it: but it exists, that suffices me. The less I conceive it, the more I adore it. I humble myself, and say to him: Being of Beings! I am, because thou art. To meditate thee, is to remount to my source. The most worthy use of my reason, is to annihilate myself before thee. My mind is delighted, and my weakness charmed, when I feel myself overwhelmed by thy greatness." *Pens. Maxim. Esp. de J. J. Rousseau.*

† "I shall therefore say to the haughty philosopher," says a judicious writer of the last century, "Do not rail against those mysteries, which reason cannot possibly fathom; attach yourself to the examination of those truths which may be easily approached, and which you may, as it were, touch and handle, and which answer for all the rest. These truths are striking and sensible facts, in which religion has, as it were, intrenched herself entirely, in order to strike equally the learned and the unlearned. These facts are given over to your curiosity, to your severest scrutiny. These are the foundations of your religion; dig, then, around them; try to shake them; go down with the flambeau of philosophy till you reach that very antique stone which has been so repeatedly rejected by unbelievers, and which has crushed them all. But when, after having come to a certain depth, you shall have reached the hand of the Most High, who since the commencement of the world sustains this grand and majestic edifice; an edifice strengthened and consolidated by the very storms and torrents of years—stop, and dig not down to the very abyss of hell. Philosophy cannot guide you further without leading you astray; you

more wisely? I follow the voice of my reason, as far as it can guide me, and when I leave it, it is by its advice that I do so, and in order to place myself in the hands of a guide infinitely more sure, and who cannot lead me astray. Reason, after having conducted me, according to the above procedure, to the very sanctuary of Religion, struck with religious awe, seems to hold forth to me this exalted language: I have hitherto guided thee, but henceforth thou shall be guided by a surer and a higher authority: it is no longer a dim ray, but the sun itself, in all its splendour, that will direct thy steps: It is no longer man, but God himself: no longer reason, but the uncreated wisdom, that will dictate to thee its oracles. My last advice is, Believe and adore.

SECTION V.

XIX. *It is most worthy of God's infinite wisdom and goodness, to reveal mysteries to men.*

The Unitarian opens another battery—why, says he, should God oblige men to believe impenetrable mysteries, and bring their reason into such hard captivity? What use is there in believing mysteries?

I answer, in the first place, that God was not bound to call our Unitarian friend to his council, nor to take his advice on the laws which he was to give him; that he, himself, knows the reason why he would bring his reason under the yoke of faith, and that it ought to suffice him that he knows it; that he is his creature, and not his judge; that he ought to adore the conduct which he holds in his regard, and not rashly scrutinize it: that all that he commands, ought to appear wise to him, for the sole reason, that it is he who commands it, since he is wisdom itself, and that, if he does not obey him but because that which he commands, appears to him wise,

enter upon the unfathomable abyss of eternity; Philosophy must here veil her eyes as well as the vulgar, and entrust man with confidence to the hands of faith." *P. Guenard, Discours sur l'esprit Philosophique, Courronne a L'acca, Franc. en* 1775.

then he sets himself above his Creator, and he obeys, in reality, not his God, but himself.

XX. I answer, in the second place, that it was for his glory that God would have men believe impenetrable mysteries; for it became the infinite greatness of God, to prescribe to men what they were to believe, as well as what they were to practice, and to hold his sway over their reason, as well as their will. In fulfilling, notwithstanding, the repugnances of their heart, and the revolts of their senses, the precepts which God has given them for the rule of their actions, they honour God as the Supreme Sanctity: in believing, notwithstanding, the oppositions of their reason the mysteries which God has revealed to them, they honour him as the Sovereign Truth: thus, in the Christian religion, the whole man is, as it were, immolated to God: he immolates his understanding by faith, his heart by love, his will by the acceptation of the divine precepts, his body by the practice of all kinds of good works. The clear result of all this, is, that a religion which holds out to the belief of men incomprehensible mysteries, is more worthy of God than a religion that would propose no such mysteries, and that, of course, the former religion is more perfect, and has a character of Divinity more than the latter, whence, in the ultimate analysis, it follows, that the incomprehensibility of mysteries, so far from being a reason to reject the Christian religion, is, on the contrary, a reason the more to receive it. God is incomprehensible, not only in his own nature, but also in all his works: a religion, therefore, that emanates from God, and is, of course, the most noble work of God, must needs be marked by the first and most illustrious attribute of the Deity. Mysteries, therefore, far from being a solid objection to a religion, are rather one of the most striking characteristics of the true religion: A religion that consecrates but one half of man to God, is not worthy of God, since it is the office of religion to consecrate the whole man, with all his powers, to the service of his creator. Now, a religion devested of mysteries, consecrates but half the man to the honour and glory of God, viz. the will, whilst it leaves the

most noble part of man, namely, his understanding, free and independent: for how can the understanding of man pay its tribute of honour to God, as the eternal truth, unless it be by captivating itself to the obedience of faith?

XXI. *Thirdly.* Since God deigned to make himself known to men, mysteries became unavoidable, it being altogether impossible for God to reveal to men his essence, his designs, the plan of his providence, the economy of his works. &c. without revealing to them things incomprehensible, and, of course, *mysteries.* We are much better entitled to ask: of what use would religion itself be, without these august objects of faith? It would soon be reduced to what it was in the hands of the ancient philosophers, a code of paradoxes, and problematic questions. It is by mysteries that God has fixed the faith of his people, and sheltered it from the attempts of a restless and ever-varying philosophy. When Jesus Christ appeared on earth, Philosophy, by its interminable disputes, had shaken every truth, and spared neither dogma, nor morality, whilst it called in question the most evident principles. Mysteries were necessary to impose silence on that proud and restless reason, and to make it submit to the yoke of faith.

XXII. *Fourthly.* The whole system of the Christian dispensation being grounded on mysteries, it is obvious, that these are as essential to the edifice of religion, as the foundations are to any superstructure. Take away, for example, the dogma of Original Sin, and of the blessed Trinity, and the whole edifice of religion will instantly tumble to the ground: for if there is no Original Sin, there is, manifestly, no need of the mystery of the Incarnation, and, by denying these, you must necessarily deny those that essentially depend on them—I mean the mystery of the Redemption, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ into Heaven, and, if there is no Trinity, it is as impossible to conceive those mysteries, as it is to conceive the coming of the Holy Ghost. He, therefore, that declares against mysteries, by a necessary consequence, overturns, at once, the whole august and magnificent structure of Religion.

SECTION VI.

XXIII. *Mysteries, far from being dry and useless speculations, are, on the contrary, the very basis of, and the strongest incitement to, the observance of Christian Morality.*

But, continues the Unitarian, must it not be confessed on all hands, that "revelation is expressly intended for our instruction, edification, rule of life, and means of happiness?"* What then have mysteries, those barren, metaphysical, and *unintelligible* notions to do with a religion, which ought to be essentially practical?

Such is the idea, the Unitarian has formed of the mysteries of religion, in general, nor ought we to be surprized at this; since, on the contrary, it would rather appear strange that men who have accustomed themselves to view religion more as a human, than a divine institution, and who are determined to disbelieve, whatever soars above the reach of their understanding, should possibly perceive in mysteries any thing else but dry and empty speculations. But characters of this description are not competent judges to decide on a subject like this. Let us rather listen to the Fathers of the Church, to the Saints of God in past ages, and to the true faithful, who, with a lively faith, contemplate the said mysteries, and let us see whether they appeared to them as barren and uninstructive as they do to the Unitarian.

And, to begin with the ineffable mystery of the adorable Trinity, what a source of Heavenly joy opens to the faithful, in beholding in his God and Sovereign Good, that ineffable and eternal union, love, and joy, that exists between the three divine persons, equal and consubstantial to each other! What a noble, what a perfect pattern discovers itself in the same union, of that tender and constant love, which ought to unite all the children of men into one and the same family—a pattern proposed by Jesus Christ himself for our imitation. John. xvii. v. 11. "That they all may be one, as thou, Father in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

* Miscellany. Abstract of Unitarian belief.

Even in the fall of man, what great and practical truths does not the attentive believer discover? For if he is struck with awe in considering the extent of the divine justice, and the terrible consequences of one mortal sin, he is likewise enraptured in beholding the tender mercies of God breaking forth from the dark cloud of this mystery, in the cheering tidings of a future Redeemer, with which the Lord presently erected and consoled sinful man after his fall. How much does he admire the wisdom and goodness of his God, when he comes to reflect, that that very sin, which was to have been the cause of his eternal ruin, is made, in the gracious designs of God, the very occasion of the most astonishing and amiable mystery of the incarnation, by which, as St. Leo observes, sinful man was to gain much more than he had lost by his guilty parent.

But if these bright prospects, if the bare promise of a Saviour, was such a source of delight and comfort to all the righteous of the old law, what raptures will not be excited in the breasts of men by the accomplishment of this solemn promise, the actual incarnation of the Son of God, and his temporal birth at Bethlehem! O, what great things does not faith lay open to the faithful soul, at the astonishing spectacle of a God made man, of a God annihilated under the form of a servant, of a God under the amiable shape of an infant, of a God born in a stable, and laid in a manger! O, it is here the faithful begins to know his God, and the admirable inventions of his tender love towards him. "God so loved the world, (it is thus he exclaims in a transport of ecstacy, with St. John,) as to give his only-begotten Son, that, whoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting." John iii. v. 16. Here the Christian soul prostrate before this Divine Infant in profound adoration with the shepherds, and the wise men of the East, is amazed at the wonderful designs of the Most High upon men, at the admirable contrivances of his wisdom and love for the reparation of mankind. It is here he beholds the majesty of God displayed in all its infinite greatness, seeing him, in the person of Jesus Christ, adored by an adorable God-man: Hence he

conceives the meaning of the sublime canticle, "Glory be to God in the highest, and, on earth, peace to men of good will."* It is here, he becomes able in some measure to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, to know also the charity of Christ, which surpasses all knowledge.† It is here, he learns more wisdom in a few minutes with St. Bernard, than all the philosophers could teach him during ages, for he, contemplating his Saviour in the manger, reasons thus: either the Incarnate Wisdom of God is deceived, or the world. But Jesus Christ cannot be deceived, therefore, the world is mistaken—the only-begotten Son of God, born in a stable, in extreme poverty and suffering, despised by, and unknown to, the world: what does that mean? what else but what man could never hitherto understand, and what it was most important for him to know, viz. that the end and happiness of man do not consist in the goods of fortune, nor in sensual pleasures, nor in the esteem of men, nor in exalted stations amongst them; but rather in a generous contempt of all the empty goods, which the world so ardently pursues. It is here, the Saints of God, by the example of an humble, poor, annihilated, and suffering God, learnt the exalted science of despising riches, pleasures, and honours: it is here, they became enamoured with hardships, poverty, and all kinds of sufferings, in seeing them courted, esteemed, and loved, by the Incarnate Wisdom of God. It is here, that humility, patience, and self-denial, are enforced by an example, the force of which it is impossible to resist. For, if the Son of God, became a man of sorrows, who shall refuse to suffer? and if the infinite majesty is thus annihilated, will it not be an intolerable impudence in a filthy worm of the earth to be puffed up with pride and haughtiness?‡

If from the stable of Bethlehem, the Christian with the flambeau of faith in his hand, repairs to Mount Calvary, what a great and exalted spectacle presents itself to his view! An affectionate look at the crucifix teaches him more than vo-

* St. Luke, ii. v. 14. † Ephes. iii. v. 14. ‡ St. Bernard.

lumes could do: Yes, in this great book he reads in flaming and indelible letters the excess of divine love towards men, the infinite sanctity and justice of God, which cannot be satisfied but by a victim of infinite dignity, the grievousness of mortal sin, the infinite importance of salvation, since the former could not be effaced, nor the latter be procured but by the death of a God-man on the cross. Here the poor is consoled, in beholding his God fastened naked to the cross; the sufferer is comforted, by beholding in his God, "the man of sorrows," expiring in torments; the proud is confounded in viewing the God of Majesty satiated with reproaches. Here, a sublime and heavenly philosophy is delivered, supported by the greatest examples that were ever exhibited—here the Apostles, the Martys, and other Saints of God, assiduously studied, and learned those exalted lessons which none but a God-man could teach, and which, reduced to practice, struck the world with so much astonishment.

What shall I say of that most amiable of all mysteries, which, by way of excellence, may be justly styled the mystery of love, and in which the eternal Son of God, not satisfied with communicating his divine nature to one individual humanity, as he did in the mystery of the Incarnation, gives himself, his sacred flesh and blood with all his Divinity, in the most lovely manner to every one of his faithful children, and thus makes them partakers of his divine nature? O, it is here the divine love truly triumphs in all its lustre! It is here the divine power with a profusion truly divine, pours out infinite treasures to enrich man. What exalted, what generous thoughts, what transports of admiration, of gratitude, of love, of heavenly gladness, must not be excited in a Christian soul, at the contemplation of so high an esteem, of so tender a kindness of God towards men? What powerful incitements to purity, to sanctity, to a noble-minded generosity, and to a kind of divine life must not the Christian feel, in that most intimate union, in that divine alliance, which he contracts with his God, the sole fountain of all sweetness and of all good, by the participation of his adorable Body and Blood?

In the mystery of the Resurrection the faith of the Christian is confirmed by one of the most astonishing miracles, and his hope strengthened by a most illustrious pledge of his own future resurrection, whilst, in the mystery of his glorious ascension, his charity is inflamed and his heart drawn to the regions of eternal bliss, whither his Saviour has ascended to prepare him a place.

Mysteries, therefore, are not what the Unitarian imagines them to be, viz: mere metaphysical speculations, or empty notions, but they are the very foundations of the whole fabrick of Religion, the most powerful, practical lessons on the infinite perfections of God, the duties of men, and on the most heroic virtues: They are inexhaustable sources of heavenly knowledge, delight and comfort. It was, therefore, most worthy of God to reveal them; and, to reject them, is to deprive men of what is most august and sublime in religion, and what is most instructive to men either learned or unlearned.

I cannot better conclude this whole dissertation, than by subjoining the following beautiful passage of a learned and pious Prelate of France. "Religious dogmas when abandoned to reason, or, to speak with more truth, to the depravity of men, as was the case amongst the Pagans, were, what they must have been expected to be, the corruption of morality. But let us turn to another side. Let us consider that revealed doctrine, which disbelievers reject as indifferent and foreign to conduct and practice. We shall find that that doctrine is the very foundation of the observance of the soundest morality. Amongst us it is the belief of mysteries that engages men to fulfil their religious duties. Unbelievers, take a view, we entreat you, of all the truths which the Author of Christianity has taught mankind, and which you consider as merely speculative, and such as are only calculated to embarrass the mind and to overburthen it with a useless yoke. Examine, not only their perfect accordance with each other, which makes of them a connected system, a complete summary of doctrine; but also their intimate relation with morality, and you will discover, that there is not one amongst them, which does not serve,

either to fan our love and gratitude by some benefit; or to gratify our desires by some gift; or to support our courage by some hope; or to prompt us to virtue by some promise; or to reclaim us from vice by some menace; or to direct our morals by some example. If you examine our sacred dogmas, you will not find one, that is not a fecund principle of moral consequences; not one that does not shed its influence on our duties towards God, as well as towards our fellow-men; not one that does not present either some object, or some means, or some motive to what is good and virtuous. No, he that renders useful whatever he ordains, ordains nothing uselessly." *Instruct. Past. de M. L'Eveque de Langres sur la revelation.*

UNITARIANISM

PHILOSOPHICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY EXAMINED.

NO. II.

"Propterea sicut per unum hominem peccatum in hunc mundum intravit, et per peccatum mors, et ita in omnes homines mors pertransiit, in quo omnes peccaverunt." Epist. ad Rom. cap. 5, v. 12.

"Wherefore as by one man Sin entered into this World, and by Sin death: and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned."

ON ORIGINAL SIN.

This important dissertation on Original Sin, may very properly be reduced to the following heads, which comprise all we have to say on this subject. In the first place, I shall give a short historical sketch of those that, in former times, impugned Original Sin; next, I shall investigate how far the light of reason alone, unaided by Divine Revelation, concurs to the establishment of this fundamental Dogma of Religion, and what the ancient philosophers, guided by the dictates of reason alone, and men in general have, at all times, thought of Original Sin. Finally, I shall conclude by demonstrating the existence of Original Guilt from the highest authority upon earth, viz: the Divine Scriptures, and the exalted and irrefragable authority of the first ages of the Church.

SECTION I.

Brief historical sketch of those ancient heresies, that impugned Original Sin.

XXIV. Pelagius, a Scottish Monk, was the first, who, as early as the fourth century, dared openly to deny Original Sin.

It is from the rejection of original guilt, as from their poisonous source, all the other errors of this famous hieresiarch naturally flowed. Accordingly, he taught, 1st. that the sin of Adam and Eve did damage to them only, but not to their descendants, and he thought, that he had sufficiently varnished over this absurdity, by saying that the sin of Adam had, indeed, caused damage to his posterity, but only by way of example, and that they had really become guilty, but only by way of imitation, and that it was only in this sense, it was written, that all men have sinned in Adam. 2dly. He, of course, maintained, that the death of all men, who draw their origin from Adam, is the natural condition of man, and that Adam, although he had not sinned, would have died. 3dly. That men are now born such as Adam was created; that is to say, as Pelagius contended, without virtue and without vice. 4thly. He asserted that Baptism was necessary for infants, not, indeed, in order that Original Sin, (whose existence he denied,) be remitted to them, but in order that by it the children may be consecrated to God, who makes those children, whom he had made good in their creation, still better, by their renovation in Baptism. 5thly and lastly. He asserted that those children, who die without Baptism, although excluded from the kingdom of Heaven, are, notwithstanding, on account of their original innocency, to enjoy a certain kind of a blessed and eternal life. And these were the chief heads of the Pelegian heresy, in regard to Original Sin. We learn from St. Augustin,* that the same sectarians, when pressed by the arguments of the Catholics, admitted, at last, that Adam would not have died, had he not sinned, and that, after his sin, he had become mortal, and had begotten children, like unto himself, mortal. And thus, in fine, they admitted, that the death of the body was drawn from Adam by the way of generation, but not the death of the soul or sin. This Pelagian error, long since crushed by St. Augustin, and by the authority of the Catholic Church, has been revived by some innovators of latter times, the Albigenses, Zuinglians, and, in the last ages, by

* St. Aug. lib. 4, contra duas Epistolas Pelag. cap. 2, et 4.

the Socinians, whose system was the same with that of our Unitarians, so that in drawing the picture of Socinianism, you have, at once, the perfect resemblance of Unitarianism.

SECTION II.

Original Sin examined by the light of reason alone, unassisted by Divine Revelation.

XXV. By Original Sin is meant a certain stain, which so defiles, at the moment of his origin, every man descending from Adam, through the natural way of generation, as to render him displeasing to God, subject to death, and the other miseries of this life, and which, if not washed off by Baptism, excludes man from eternal bliss; or, if you chose, in other words, it is the divine displeasure, in which all men are born, and which the sin of Adam, as the head and representative of all mankind, has brought down upon his children, the descendants of a guilty parent, and which chiefly consists in the privation of sanctifying grace, and in the subsequent exclusion from eternal life, (unless that grace be restored by Baptism, received, either in deed, or in desire,) and lastly in the subjection of mankind to death, rebellious concupiscense, and a long train of other calamities. Now, the question at issue between the Christians of all past ages, and the Unitarians of our days, is to know, whether men are actually born in such a privation of grace or not, and whether the sin of Adam has *actually* hurt not only him personally, but also his posterity. If we interrogate revelation, we may truly say with St. Augustin, the hammer of the Pelagians, "concerning this cause, two councils, (of Carthage and Milevis,) have been sent to the Apostolic See, from whence also the answers have been returned: The cause is at an end: would to God that at length an end were put to the error."* *De hac causa duo concilia*, (Carthaginense et Milevitanum,) *missa sunt ad Sedem Apostolicam, inde etiam rescripta venerunt: Causa finita est: utinam aliquando finiatur error.*" But as we have to do with gentlemen, who are eternally boasting of having the whole

* Sermone, cxxxi. alias ii. de Verbis Apostoli.

strength of reason on their side, and who are in the habit of obtruding their erroneous opinions on the public, as so many irrefragable dictates of reason, it will not be amiss to see, what, upon the whole, reason says of Original Sin; does it proclaim or at least insinuate, its existence, or does it contradict it? A moment's reflection will determine this interesting question.

XXVI. *First.* In entering into myself, and listening to the dictates of reason, I find, that we have duties to comply with towards God, towards ourselves, and towards our fellow creatures: we know them, we understand them, we approve of them, and still we do not fulfil them, and not only do we not fulfil them, but we moreover feel a certain abhorrence, when there is question about putting the hand to the work to accomplish them, we experience a certain inclination of doing quite the reverse of what we ought to do, and of what we know and acknowledge, ought to be done: this is one of those truths, to know which, it is enough to enter into one's own heart and to analyze it. He that has studied his own heart, will, if candid, readily acknowledge, within his own nature, the truth of those lines of the poet.*

* "Excute virgineo conceptas pectore flammas
Si potes, infelix. Si possem, sanior essem!
Sed trahit invitam nova vis: aliudque cupido,
Mens aliud suadet. Video meliora, proboque,
Deteriora sequor." Lib. 7. Metam. v. 17.

Wretch, from thy virgin-breast, this flame expel,
And soon, O! could I, all would then be well;
But love, resistless love, my soul invades,
Discretion this, affection that persuades.
I see the right, and I approve it too;
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue. DRYDEN.

The same bard graphically expresses the same melancholy truth in the following verse:

"Quod licet, ingratum est: quod non licet, acrius urit."
"We hate what is lawful, and pursue with eagerness what is forbidden."

Catullus perfectly agrees with Ovid in the following distich:

"Odi et amo, quare id facio, fortasse requiris?
Nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior."
"I hate and I love, you perhaps may ask, why I do so?
I know not, but I feel it to be the case, and I am wretched."

Let us exemplify this striking truth: It is an undoubted principle, that it is the essential duty of man, to seek the honour of God in all things, at all times, and in all its extent; and still it is a fact, that man aspires, in all things, at all times, and with every possible effort, to his own honour; and that he aims at it, *without any relation whatever* to the honour of God. And not only he strives to cause himself to shine above others, but he feels, moreover, a natural and uncommonly strong propensity and desire, that all around him may be darkened, in order that he only may be blazed forth into notice and esteem. Observe man attentively; observe him with a sharp eye, and you will find, that, in all his words, in all his actions, in all his qualifications, he betrays inadvertently, and, at times against his own will, a certain fund, a certain inclination and inward impulse, which tends *unjustly* to lessen his own known miseries, to make boast of himself, and to enhance those qualities, which make him appear great and praise-worthy. This is not all: you will discover, that he secretly plumes himself upon many things, and appropriates them almost entirely to himself, and wishes and does all he can underhandedly to make men believe that they are, in some measure, the fruit of his own industry, although he be convinced in his mind, that he has received them *entirely* from God, and that, which seems to me I know not what to call it, either more foolish or more wicked, is, that this man puffs himself up with extravagant self-conceit, and despises and tramples upon those to whom the hand of the Creator has been less kind, and less liberal. Turn now over to some man of the class of those whom we call learned, that is to say, less ignorant than others, and tell him, "you, indeed, are a man of knowledge, you possess such information as raises you far above the greater part of your fellow-men: you are universally respected as a scholar, but recollect, that, had the sovereign dispenser of every good gift not bestowed on you that penetration of genius; if he had not placed you under such and such circumstances; if he had not afforded you, in your career, so many favourable opportunities, with the goods of fortune, and a proportionate state of health, you would be as ignorant as other men." This cer-

tainly will be a language, which, at most, will extort a speculative approbation, but not an inward assent: this language will be known to be consonant to reason, but will not be relished. Man would wish that all be traced back to his own industry, to his own attentions and efforts, and, in fine, solely to his own will; and since God's benefits cannot be denied, he at least could wish, that they be dissembled, and impiously passed over unnoticed. But suppose, after all, that this same man, yielding to reason, determine to humble himself, and to offer violence to himself, he still will always meet within himself a contrary tendency, a natural inclination, which he will not be able to root out altogether, or to master after such a manner, as that it should not, at times, rise up, throw him down, and overcome him.

XXVII. Let us continue our observations, and accost that other man, surrounded with the goods of fortune, and with the insignia of honour and dignities; but, who, at the same time, is destitude of all personal merit; let us penetrate a little into his heart, and let us make him understand, that, prior to his existence he had, and could have nothing at all, by which he could have merited to be born of such noble and rich parents; and that, of course, all his riches, his honours and the other dignities of his family, have been, in every respect, bestowed on him, by Almighty God, as well as poverty and distresses come from God, on the greater part of mankind. Will he relish this discourse? Assuredly, he will not. Will he be able to refuse his approbation? Certainly not: but he will always feel a secret repugnancy to grant it; therefore,.... therefore, he will not make much account of such a discourse, he will dissemble the kindnesses of his God, and make you in a certain manner understand, that he considers as due to himself, the splendour of his extraction, and his greatness in the world. What, therefore, must we infer from this? That man does not do what he ought to do; and why does he not do it? Because he experiences a strong inclination not to do it? But how did he come to have that inclination? Who has given it to him? We know not.

XXVIII. *Secondly.* Next I thus reason with myself. If man be the work of an eternal and most wise artist, he must have been created with a proper proportion, a certain aptness or fitness, for the attainment of those ends, for which his Creator designed him.

This self-evident truth, founded on God's infinite perfection, shall be the fundamental basis, the directive principle of all our researches. Let us give a glance at man; let us observe him in some, I know not what direction to his ends.

Man has a natural tendency to preserve his physical existence; his own individual being.

If man has a natural tendency to preserve his physical existence, his own individual being; he must have some proportion; some natural aptness for that end.

Man was created for happiness; for that perfect happiness, which he cannot find but in God: man, therefore, was created for God, and was directed towards God: Behold a truth, which both reason and experience conspire to render self-evident. If man was created for God; if the heart of man was designed for its Creator; man, then I say to myself, must have a certain proportion, a certain natural aptness towards acquiring the knowledge of that Creator, he must have a strong tendency, and a strong inclination, which not only should directly impel him towards God; but, which should likewise, turn and direct him towards all that is to serve as a means to compass this his end, this his destination, this his all; and which, of course, should withdraw and remove him, without any disagreement with his free will, from all that which may prove to him an obstacle to and a deviation from his last end.

This being established, let us again observe man: Man naturally tends to preserve his physical existence; his own individual being: Behold the end!

Man has a certain inclination, and a natural fitness for taking food, for moving himself by corporeal exercise, and for defending himself against any outward insult: Behold the means! Behold the proportion!

Man was created for God, and directed towards God: but where are the means, the inclination, the proportion, the natural aptness for that end?

If man has means, if he has a natural proportion for an end, which, comparatively speaking, is but of a trifling consequence; why has he not likewise, such proportionate means for the principal end, for the end of all his ends, for the object of his love, of his felicity, of his interminable beatitude, for God? Why, of course, has he not a natural and easy aptness to know him, as far as it is sufficient for him, and to love him as much as he can, and to pant after him as far as he is bound? Or, what! Is it possible, that the sovereign Author of the Universe, after having given to men such proportioned means, such strong tendencies to an end so circumscribed as is that of preserving, for a short time, their physical existence, should have denied the same, the proper proportion, fitness, and inclination, for an end, which he gives them to understand, is their only, true, last end? For an end, to which they are so incessantly brought back by the most intimate voice of their nature? And still man has not this inclination, the natural aptness for God . . . But it is repugnant to reason, that God should act after a manner so different, so preposterous, so contradictory . . . . Man, therefore, is not the work of God: but this is not possible, and we have a thousand demonstrations to the contrary . . . . Therefore . . . .

SECTION III.

Man has no natural and sufficient aptness to know God as far as it is sufficient for him to know him.

XXIX. Let us for a moment figure to ourselves a certain class of men, who finding themselves in the midst of creatures, know scarce any more than that they exist: their mind arrives at a state of reflection and judgment: they naturally look around and observe the creatures, by which they are surrounded. When they come to examine themselves, cer-

tain features, which cannot escape them, fill them with admiration and amazement. What are we, say they, and what are all these things? Certain it is, that some great Being, I know not whom or what, has made this beautiful and enchanting spectacle. But next, who, and what is that great being whom I know not? They have a desire to be informed of him; they feel a great inclination to know and to worship him: but they do not seem to be willing to put themselves to great pains to find him. They cast, therefore, their eyes around; some one, perchance, will observe certain creatures, which most strike his imagination, as for instance, the *Sun*, which dazzles him with his splendour, which cheers him with his light, and which benefits him by his influences. He will reflect, and reflect over and over again, and finding throughout the whole creation nothing at once more majestic, and more beneficial: this, will he say, is the Creator of the Universe! Behold how he sparkles with rays all around, how majestic he is! How he preserves and maintains himself! Bow down, O, man! your head before the sublime majesty of this Supreme Being, of this Monarch of the Universe! Another, imagining that he ought to form to himself more ample, and more extensive ideas of the Deity, will raise his eyes to the skies, spangled with brilliant stars; this expanse, he will say, is that great one, whom I know not, who created us, and whom we are searching after. Some other, perhaps, still more gross, and more stupid, will stoop before the very beasts, and look for his God among metals, plants, animals: prostrating himself, and trembling before those, to whom he was assigned by nature itself, as sovereign lord and master. This is the lot of humanity.... poor and miserable man that thou art: to what length wilt thou carry thy stupidity? Why dost thou not rise above the metals, the plants, the animals? Why dost thou not soar above the heavens, the stars, the sun, to find out him, who made the metals, the plants, the animals, the heavens, the stars, the sun? But, how is he to do this? How can he pretend to it? Where are the proportionate means? Where the natural aptness?

SECTION IV.

XXX. *Man is not such as he ought to be:*

The man, that does not enter into himself, with a philosophical and scrutinizing eye, the man, that is not able to feel in a lively manner that he has no natural aptness for the acquirement of that knowledge of God, which will suffice for him, finds himself naturally wrapped in darkness, and confusion, and cannot but wish that this truth may be presented to him in a clearer light. Let him then come to experience; let him consult, for a moment, the history of every people, of every age, and of every nation; and he will find, that the state of all men, even their primitive state, that is to say, that state, in which nature rather than art spoke to men, is perfectly conformable to the ideas, which we have hitherto advanced. He will find men in a very imperfect society, and in the vilest state of misery and degradation; he will find, that, either they do not care to think of God, at all, or that they have placed on the throne of the most high, some wretched creature. The sun, the moon, the skies, the stars, the herbs, the plants, the beasts; nay, the most wicked and impious men, were the objects of the adorations and homages of all nations, who were, without exception, naturally ignorant and blind.

But, if men were so far from that knowledge of the true God, in that state, in which nature spoke and operated with all its force and energy, I conclude, that, they had not a natural and sufficient fitness to know him; for had they been endowed with a natural and sufficient fitness to know him, they would assuredly have known him *in a state*, in which nature spoke and acted with all its energy; but they have not known him, therefore, they had no natural aptness to know him. On the other hand it has been demonstrated, and is of itself evident, that the heart of man was made for God; man, therefore, ought to have a natural aptness to know God; but man has not that natural and sufficient aptness; therefore, man is not such as he ought to be: but it is re-

pugnant and impossible, that the work of a God, infinitely wise, be not such as it ought to be; therefore, . . . therefore, . . .

SECTION V.

XXXI. *Man is not such as he was created by God.*

We have now made gigantic strides in a very winding, intricate, and arduous road. We have discovered, and not without delight, many truths, but the most difficult and the darkest part of the road remains yet, perhaps, to be encountered. We have to reconcile two truths, which are equally as incontestible, as they seem to be opposite, repugnant, and incompatible with each other.

Man is the work of God: man is not such as he ought to be. Man is the work of God; therefore, he was created such as he ought to be: but to be such as he ought to be, he ought to have been created with a natural and sufficient aptness to know God, because he was created for God, and still man has not that natural and sufficient aptness to know God; man, therefore, is not such as he was created by God.

This truth, which presents itself to us with so clear and resplendent an aspect; this truth, which, beaming all on a sudden on our mind, forms a most admirable connexion of ideas, and lays open to us in full sight, as it were, the whole nature of man; this truth, I say, will perchance not be equally understood by all. Let us then try some other method; let us call men to their own heart; let them feel this humiliating truth, which they have not as yet known by their understanding.

SECTION VI.

XXXII. *Two most intimate and opposite natural tendencies in the heart of man, demonstrate that man is not such as he was created by God.*

To a man of an upright and candid mind, to a man that is sincerely disposed to listen to the language of his own heart, I here present a prospect worthy of his attention. He has

nothing else to do, but to place it before himself, and, after having devested himself of every selfish view and prejudice, to give ear to the inmost, natural, and sincere voice of his heart.

O MAN!

In all thy actions have nothing else in view but virtue only. Let this be the principle, the means, and the end, of all thy undertakings.

In all thy actions, and at all times, have nothing else in view but thy own self. Let thy personal interest be the means and the end.

The love, which thou owest thy Creator and thyself, shall be the sole spring and mover of all thy actions; and nothing but rectitude, justice, and equity, will lead thee to the fulfilment of the one and the other.

Pain and pleasure shall be the *primum mobile* of all thy actions; provided thou escapest the former, and attainest the latter, do not mind the means.

Remember that one single act of virtue, is preferable to all the treasures and pleasures of the world.

The enjoyment of even the smallest pleasure, is preferable to any thing else that is not pleasure.

Man was created for virtue; virtue alone constitutes his felicity.

Man was created for pleasure; sensible pleasures are the object of his heart.

Love thy fellow-men as thy brethren in God and for God; and let thy love be sincere and pure, upright, disinterested, benevolent, and constant. Do not do to others what thou wouldst not wish that others should do to thee; and do to others what thou wouldst wish others should do to thee.

Love, indeed, thy fellow-creatures, but take heed never to love fruitlessly, or uselessly. This principle, "Do not do to others what thou wouldst not wish that others should do to thee, and do to others what thou wouldst wish others should do to thee," this principle, I say, thou must wish to see deeply stamped upon the heart of all other men, but as to thyself, regulate every thing according to thy own personal interest.

Forget injuries, and avenge thyself upon thy enemies, by a generous forgiveness.

Cause, if thou canst, all those that oppose thy will, to feel the effects of thy resentment. Compassion for thy enemies would be weakness. Thy enemies thwart thy felicity: they deserve no pardon.

Let thy present happiness make the happiness of thy brethren; and, *vice versa*, let the happiness of thy brethren constitute thy own happiness.

Let thy felicity consist in putting down thy fellow-men; and let the putting down thy fellow-men constitute thy felicity.

If, first of all, we set about examining these principles, so opposite, and so contradictory to each other, we shall certainly discover in the one, the character of virtue, and in the other, that of vice; we shall discover, that those form the very basis of social order and mutual love, and that these, by destroying the one and the other, raise upon their ruins a selfishness, which is deservedly detested by all other men, and we shall, finally, comprehend with the most certain and clear evidence, that man was, and is naturally, designed to follow the first, and to fly from and abhor the second, chiefly because he is designed to practice virtue, not vice, to preserve social order, not to overturn it. This once granted, let us simply propose these principles to our heart, and we shall see, that, notwithstanding the favourable prepossession of our reason in behalf of virtue, our heart discovers, both in the one and the other, something good and something beautiful; we shall find that something pleases it both in the one and the other, and that it feels two attractions, two natural inclinations, which incline and draw it, the one to these, the other to those. Nothing can be more reasonable than these truths.

If, therefore, man has two natural inclinations opposed to each other; one to virtue, the other to vice; if man feels himself drawn to follow, not only what he ought to follow, but also what he knows and conceives ought not to be followed, I conclude that man is not such as he was created by Almighty God: and I prove it.

God, who is the fountain head of all virtues, who *naturally* abhors all that is not beauty, that is not perfection, that is not virtue, cannot, assuredly, form a creature with an internal natural inclination to vice, with an internal natural inclination to that, which the creature itself infallibly knows, and naturally conceives, it ought not to follow; therefore, God has not created man with an internal inclination to vice, with an internal inclination to that which he infallibly knows and naturally conceives he ought not to follow: but *man actually feels* such an internal natural inclination, to what he infallibly

knows and naturally conceives, he ought not to follow: therefore, man is not such as he was created by God.

Any man, that reflects but a moment on the infinite perfection of the divine essence, cannot, I am sure, entertain the least doubt of the first and fundamental proposition, viz: that God cannot give to any of his creatures *a natural and wicked inclination;* and no man in his senses can find difficulty in the proposition which contains the conclusion: for if God cannot do it, it certainly follows that he has not done it.

As to the minor, or second proposition, to wit: *that man feels a natural internal inclination to vice*, I hold it for certain, that no one can deny it, except he who is determined to stifle the voice of his own nature, and to give the lie to all other men, who naturally experience within themselves two natural opposite inclinations, two contrary tendencies. What, then, shall we say? We shall say, that it is certain, self-evident, and altogether undeniable, that man is not such as he was created by God.

We shall not, however, stop here, but in holding out to our heart again the above view, we shall search for other proofs, for other evidences, in confirmation of so striking and important a truth. Behold us here at opposite principles: if we try to put in practice either the one or the other, such an experiment will make us feel, in a most lively manner, a certain intrinsic repugnancy, a certain, I know not what abhorrence, a very great difficulty with regard to those principles, which invite us to perfection and to virtue, and, on the contrary, an easy adhesion, a tendency, which draws us, and, as it were, forces us to those principles which form the character of a wicked man. This is another most intimate truth, which needs no proof; every man feels it within himself. Resuming, therefore, with more strength, with more evidence, and with more conclusiveness, than ever, our argument, let us reason thus:

God is the principle, as well as the end, of all creatures: God created them within himself, for himself, and according to his divine essence: therefore, all creatures were

created *for* God, not *against* God; they were adorned with nothing but beauties, and perfections, and virtues, because they were created to the image of the most perfect essence of God, and they could not be created otherwise; but if all creatures were formed *for* God, and not *against* God; if they were endowed with nothing but beauties, perfections, and virtues, then man was created *for* God, not *against* God.—This truth again is self-evident to every reflecting mind.

But at present, man is not such; therefore man is not such as he was created by God. Man is not such, because he is against God; because man has a natural and internal abhorrence of those means, which lead him to virtue, God being the very original virtue. Man is against God, because he has an easy and natural attraction to all that is against beauty, against perfection, and against virtue, God being perfection and virtue itself: but if man be against God, then he is not only not such as he was created of God, but he is quite the reverse of what he was created of God, the reverse of the most perfect essence of God, naturally against God; and on the other hand it is most certain that he was created for God, and to the image of the beauties and perfections of God.

SECTION VII.

XXXIII. *The conclusion is, that the nature of man is vitiated and corrupted.*

If man naturally bears within himself a strong inclination opposite to virtue, and opposite, of course, to the most perfect being of God, he, assuredly, is not such as he was created of God; and next if it be true, that this wicked inclination is stronger than that which man feels for virtue, it must be likewise true, that not only he is not such as he was created by of God, but that moreover he is the very reverse of what he was created of God. There is no medium, no escape, here. He only, that is obstinately determined to deny the most intuitive and incontestible truths; he, that wishes wilfully to blind himself and to give the lie to the common sense of man-

kind, in boldly maintaining that he is such as he ought to be, and that, if he feel some tendency contrary to virtue, this tendency is nothing more than the effect of his free will, such a man may, perchance, impose upon some or other person, but he is, I am sure, mistaken, if he imagines that, because this is one of those intimate truths that are felt, the same can never be demonstrated by reason. I call him to experience; let him answer; here is what I shall ask him: Do men, men I say, of all times, of all nations, of all countries do what they know they ought to do? Do they apply to virtue, for the practice of which they feel themselves to have been infallibly designed? Do they recoil with horror from that which they naturally know they ought to fly? Certainly, the bare shadow of sincerity will force any one to confess, that too many, or almost all men, do what they know they ought not to do, and that they plunge themselves into disorders, into vices, into iniquities, which they likewise abhor and detest in others, and at times, when they come to reflect, even in themselves.—But now, if men were naturally inclined to virtue, as they ought to be, they all, or nearly all, would, in fact, love their fellow-creatures; they would be just, sober, liberal, and closely attached to those virtues, which form the character of a man of principle, of an honest and social man, because, then an unusual effort of perverseness and malice would be required to overcome that blessed, innate, and natural inclination for order and virtue.

Suppose, moreover, it were possible, which is certainly not the case, that God could have created man, and designed him for a certain end, and afterwards have left him in a perfect indifference, nay, even in opposition to that same end; although it were conceived not repugnant, that God might have done this, still, I maintain it to be evident that he has not acted so, and that men are far from being found in that perfect indifference for vice and virtue; for it is an undoubted and infallible rule, that if all men, of all ages, of all nations, of all countries, were found to be in a perfect indifference for virtue and vice, at least the half of mankind would

be or would have been at some time virtuous and moral, but this is far from being the case at present, as experience sets it beyond a doubt; nor was it ever the case, as the annals of the world, in conjunction with all the monuments of antiquity, attest: man, therefore, was not created in that indifference. But if it be demonstrated by facts, that man is most certainly not in that perfect indifference for vice and virtue; if it be demonstrated by facts, that man has not within himself that inclination, that intimate tendency proportionate to virtue, the very same facts of all nations, of all ages and countries, as we have seen above, furnish an unquestionable and experimental proof, that man experiences a strong tendency and violent inclination, which carries him to disorders and wickedness; disorders, which he knows to be such by the light of his reason, which he abhors in his fellow-creatures, and which, when he considers abstractedly, and in themselves, he cannot refrain from detesting. Man views those disorders in their native wickedness; he approaches them, takes pleasure in them, and, like a passionate lover, he dissembles them, and falling at last asleep over them, loses himself. Poor man! how well dost thou know this humiliating truth! Or wilt thou, perhaps, for a greater demonstration of thy misery, and of thy blindness, obstinately deny it? But tell me: is it not true, that if you were naturally inclined to what is good, you would have to make a great effort to abandon virtue? And is it not true, that precisely, because you are naturally tending to corruption, to evil, to iniquity, you stand, on the contrary, in need of a very painful effort to soar up to virtue, and to become familiarized with certain indispensable acts of virtue? Will you, indeed, be able to deny so certain, so evident a truth, a truth which you every day feel in the inmost recesses of your heart? Is it not likewise true, that a perfect indifference to both vice and virtue, would naturally carry with it an equal facility for the practice of the one as well as the other? And, in fine, is it not true, that the road of virtue is of itself very difficult, and that of vice, on the contrary, plain, sweet, and easy, for no other reason, assuredly, but because

your corrupt and depraved nature tends to this with pleasure, and shrinks from the former with horror? Let us, therefore, unhesitatingly conclude, that man, in his nature, is not such as he ought to be, because he has not a natural and sufficient aptness to know God, for whom he was created, and for whom he was designed; that man is not such as he ought to be, because he has not naturally a proportionate inclination for virtue, for which he was unquestionably designed, and in behalf of which reason speaks to man with such concern and energy; that, in fine, man finds himself naturally in a state opposite to that, in which he ought to be, because, besides his not tending or being inclined to good, to virtue, he experiences a secret inclination that pushes him on, and urges him, as it were, to evil. But if man be not what he ought to be, he is certainly not such as he was created by God, and if he be not such as he was created by God, it necessarily follows that the nature of man is depraved, vitiated, and corrupted.

This truth, therefore, stands demonstrated by reason; it causes itself to be felt by the intimate sense of the soul; it is confirmed by facts, and carried to the highest degree of evidence by an undeniable personal experience. Can we ask for more?

XXXV. *First objection against the above truth.*

If we attentively observe the nature of man, we shall find that it is not virtue he abhors, but the difficulty which the practice of virtue carries with it. Now, why should man, because he abhors the troublesomeness of virtue, be said not to be such as he ought to be?

This objection would carry some weight, if I had pretended to maintain, that man naturally abhors virtue; but, on the contrary, I say, that he is well pleased with it, that he delights in it, that he remains charmed and enraptured in beholding it; and that this is precisely a vestige of that first beauty, in which he was created; a vestige, which brings to his memory a happier state, viz: that of his original integrity. Nor do I deny

that man naturally abhors the trouble, which is annexed to the practice of virtue—and thus far we perfectly agree. Yes, man has no abhorrence of virtue, but only of the trouble, the difficulty, the labour, which the practice of it brings along with it. But I ask, why should the path of virtue itself be so rugged, so arduous, so almost impracticable to man, to man created for virtue, to man incessantly called to virtue by his reason, and, at times, by a certain weak, it is true, but most deep and secret impulse of his heart? This difficulty, this trouble, this labour, does not certainly originate in virtue itself, it is not intrinsically interwoven with its nature: virtue, *in its true aspect, in its true point of view*, points out an amiable, a desirable, and a most practicable road; therefore, this difficulty, this labour, and this trouble, resides in the nature of man. If the path of virtue be difficult to man, it is so, because man is too weak; if it be troublesome, it is so, because his nature is not proportioned to it; if, finally, he find it arduous, it is so, because his being was not naturally made for it: but it is certain, it is self-evident and demonstrable, that man was made for virtue, that he was created by that Supreme Being, who can, in no manner whatever, make use of means which are disproportionate to the end; man, therefore, ought not to have been too weak for virtue, his nature ought not to have been formed out of the proper proportion for the same virtue; but if man be, at present, too weak; if, within himself, he discovers scarcely any proportion whatever for the exercise of virtue; he is not such as he ought to be, and, of course, he is certainly not such as he was created by God.

XXXVI. *Another Objection.*

All the great evils of man, all the astonishing contrarieties, which he imagines that he experiences in his own being, are, in fact, but so many natural effects, which must necessarily flow from a nature, which was created after such a manner as that of man was. What wonder, therefore, that man should

have such different wills and tendencies, since he is composed of two different substances, viz. a soul and a body. No doubt but those pretended contrarieties, which you term contradictions, are the necessary ingredients, which enter into the composition of man, who, like the rest of nature, is what he ought to be.

Behold here an objection, which must be cleared up. In order to penetrate thoroughly into its fallacy and maliciousness, I ask, what is my soul? It is that being which thinks in me. What is my body? It is that matter which is united to my soul, and through which the same soul receives all its impressions. The reason, therefore, of my different tendencies, will be found in my soul as well when she acts by her own intrinsic and spiritual activity, as when she suffers herself to be drawn and acted upon by the impressions which corporeal objects make upon her through the means of the senses. This point once settled: God has formed man of a soul and of a body, and thus has naturally subjected him to diverse tendencies. If by this word, *diverse* or *different*, we mean that man was made so as naturally to experience different tendencies, which should lead him, although by different ways, to the same end, I shall feel no difficulty in granting it. But this is not the point in question: the point under consideration is to see, whether there be in man *diverse* and *opposite* tendencies, which drag him along to *diverse* and *opposite* ends. If this be the case, and if we most intimately feel, that the spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit, if we prove this arduous and continual combat within ourselves, certainly there can be no reason whatever to persuade an upright man, that he is such as he ought to be, and, of course, such as he was created by his Maker. Man was formed of matter and of spirit; but he ought assuredly to have been created in a state, in which perfect harmony would exist between matter and spirit. Man was directed to an end: but both the spirit and the matter ought, unquestionably, to have been directed by his Maker to the same end. This striking disorder, this inward discord, this eternal disunion, these different and opposite inclinations to-

wards different and opposite ends, cannot assuredly be the work of that supreme and most perfect Being, who is the very uncreated centre of order, of harmony, and of virtue. Here we find a repugnancy which we discover from the consideration of the very nature of God, and it is as absurd that man is such as he was created by God, as it is that God in the act of his outward productions, can deviate from his most perfect essence.

SECTION X.

XXXVII. *Another moral proof, that man is not such as he ought to be; he is not such as he was created by God.*

I know not to what lengths a voluntary blindness, a deplorable obstinacy may be carried. Is it possible, that an upright man can refuse his assent to such a stream of light, to such strong and intimate demonstrations? Is it possible that he should be obstinately bent upon maintaining that man is such as he ought to be, and as he was created?

Could it ever come to pass, that one, upon considering himself thus corrupted, thus vitiated, thus contradictory to himself, rather than admit such a truth, should set himself to doubt of his being the work of God? If this were the case, and if a man were to adopt this paradox, I assuredly should not take the trouble to persuade him of the contrary, and I should look upon him with an eye of compassion, as a man impervious to conviction, as one voluntarily blind. All natural theology is but a continued demonstration that man was created by God; that man is the work of God.

Laying aside, therefore, so great an extravagance, I proceed to set forth the last demonstration, and to make each one experimentally feel his own corruption, his own intrinsic perversity. I say to this man: Are you not, indeed, naturally bound to love your fellow-creatures, to rejoice at their felicity and prosperity, at least when their felicity and prosperity do you no damage whatever? Tell me, then,

candidly, how did your heart feel, when you heard, that a person altogether unknown to you, and several thousand miles distant from you, was raised by his merit to the highest rank, loaded with honours and wealth, made an object of veneration to a whole nation, and, in fine, an idol to all the world? When you have reason to believe, that such a state of exaltation and public applause is not to be of a short duration, but to pass, with the blessings of his ancestors, to his posterity, from generation to generation, tell me, O man, but tell me sincerely, how was your heart then affected? Did you, indeed, experience, as you ought to have done, a secret complacency, an inward delight, at the happiness and satisfaction of one of your fellow-men? Or rather did not some, I know not what involuntary gnawing, cause itself to be felt in your heart, a gnawing which disapproved of your fellow-man's felicity, and which also caused you to wish that such good luck had not befallen him? And still what harm did that do you? Could you ever have expected to aspire to so brilliant a post, to such an universal and well established fame, and that in so remote a country? By no means. What, then, means that inward gnawing, which disapproves of the good of your brother, and which would wish it had not fallen to his lot? What is the reason, that that corroding worm does not listen to advice, nor give ear to reason, and that it should not cease torturing you inwardly, naturally, incessantly? Is it not, indeed, a fatal germ of an inward distemper, of a connatural perverseness? What is, moreover, the meaning of that secret pleasure which you experienced at the successive disgraces of that stranger, who is altogether unknown to you, and who lives at such a distance from you? What does this indicate?

O, man! who art the sovereign of the world, the lord of the earth; man, who art a spiritual, a free, an immortal being; man, who art an object of love and tenderness to thy Creator, to thy Supreme Being; man, who art formed by God, created for God, linked to God, and destined for God; how imposing is thy majesty! how striking thy greatness!

O, man! to whom the knowledge of thy first principle and

of thy last end proves to be so difficult a task, to whom the practice of virtue is so arduous; man, who fliest from God, who usurpest the honour of God; O, man, who art naturally forgetful of thyself, who debasest thy spirit, who levelest thyself with the beast of the forest, who engulfest thyself without hesitation in matter, man who feelest within thyself a continual warfare, which inwardly contradicts thee, tosses thee to and fro, lacerâtes thee; man, who experiencest such an intrinsic power of thy passions, which agitate thee, entice thee, and, at times, drag thee, as it were, to such vices, and to such iniquities as thy reason, at the same time, disapproves of, and condemns; man, who art what thou oughtest not to be; man, who art no longer the same that thou formerly wert! O! how much do I feel dejected at thy debasement! How much am I moved at thy degradation!

SECTION XI.

XXXVIII. *Vanity and want of reflection connatural to man.*

Shall we stop here? Or shall we advance further? Shall these be the boundaries of our interesting discoveries?

The nature of man is not such as it was created by God: it is depraved, it is vitiated. Well, what benefit accrues to us from so humiliating a knowledge, from a truth which dejects, which villifies, which fills us with despair? Shall we not discover something, that will afford us comfort? Do other men stand in need of the same consolation, which we feel so necessary for ourselves? There is no doubt, but the generality of men are, partly from sentiment, partly from reasoning, and partly from other means, intimately persuaded of this melancholy truth, and still the generality of men are gay, sportive, and pass their days in mirth. This is a most astonishing spectacle. Accost that man and tell him: sir, you are not, what you ought naturally to be, you are not such as you were made by God: your being is in a state of repugnancy and contrariety to the most perfect essence of its creator:

your perfections, your beauties, are stained and corrupted, you are the sport of the most stupendous contradictions, you are far from God, opposed to God, fugitive from God .... Observe how that man will humble himself, how pensive, and how desirous he will grow to find out some remedy for this greatest of his evils. He conceivesand knows from certain features, what his original beauty ought to have been: he observes and he feels all the weight of his debasement, and of his degradation. These reflections must naturally throw him into a state of the greatest discouragement and confusion. But wait a little, retire for a moment, and behold the same man gay, merry, and full of sport .... But make him again enter into the knowledge of his own being, and, behold him again cast down, but not as much as the first time. He falls back to his wonted jovialty and joy: you repeat to him the same lesson, but your words will not have the effect which you perhaps anticipated, you will perhaps make him sad, but that sadness will be of short duration: observe him well, and you will take him for the very soul of happiness: Set about to prove to him another time the same truths: and, take my word for it, he will, although intimately persuaded of the truth, although feeling the humiliation and infelicity resulting from them, laugh you in the face, and take notice neither of his own sentiments, nor of your words, and moving to and fro among the sensible objects that surround him, you will behold gladness on his countenance, smiles on his lips, sport and festivity in his whole person; now what do you say of a conduct so preposterous? Has there been any change either in the truth or in the conviction of it? By no means: if we consider matters attentively, we will discover that the truth is the same, and that he is equally convinced of it, and that, in fine, all the change consists in the reflection. This man in the beginning retired within himself, and, of course, felt the whole force of your expressions; what wonder, therefore, if you found him so sad and so afflicted? And if, in the second instance, his sadness, his affliction, his dejection, were less, it was because his reflection was less, and if, in the end, he was not moved at all.

it is, no doubt, because there remained on his side neither reflection nor sentiment. It would seem that this man derives an uncommon blessing from his want of reflection! But it is still more surprising that this blessing does not originate in the temper of a particular individual, but, naturally extends to all mankind: all men, generally speaking, would be unhappy if they were to reflect; and if they are seen to be habitually gay, cheerful and elated, it is to be ascribed to no other cause, but to their total or partial want of reflection. Let us continue our observations, and ask any man in cold blood, how he does, and how the world goes with him? If we put such a question, alas! what a train of evils and miseries shall we presently see pass in review before us! Impetuosity and violence of passions, wild and irregular desires of a false good, excess of hunger and thirst, of heat and cold; hatreds, jealousies, suspicions, frauds, treasons, calumnies, injuries, damages, thefts, rapines, murders, earthquakes, conflagrations, tempests, droughts, pestilence, wars, and other miseries; one of which alone is sufficient to embitter all our enjoyments, all our pleasures. Yes, if we ask men, we shall find, that every one esteems himself unhappy, every one is lamenting and wailing; . . . princes, subjects, noblemen, plebeians, old and young, strong and weak, learned and unlearned, healthy and sick of every country, of every age, of every condition, and still . . . still every man, the prince and the subject, the nobleman and the plebeian, the old and the young, the stout and the weak, the wise and the ignorant, the healthy and the sick of every age, of every country, of every condition, every man, I say, is sporting, laughing, and spending his time with an air of jovialty that is really surprising; this, no doubt, is the dismal effect of a want of reflection: man is unhappy only when he reflects on himself, and the want of reflection leads him to his happiness. Wretched happiness! Delusive, imaginary, false felicity! which, instead of freeing him from his evils, only hides them, and which in some respects, makes him more blind, more miserable, more unhappy. This is the truly pitiful condition of the sons of men, to be miserable and unhappy, and to meet with no solace,

no remedy or comfort, except in not thinking on the misery of their wretchedness; and this comfort, to be sure, is a most miserable one, as it only hides from man his evils, and in hiding them, renders them irremediable. It cannot happen but through a strange disorder of the nature of man, that to think on himself, to concentrate himself into his own being and to observe his own miseries, although considered by the common class of men as the greatest evil, should be, in reality, his greatest good, as that which prompts him to seek after some remedy, and some real redress of his evils, and that, on the contrary, diversion and want of reflection, which man considers as his greatest good, should be in reality his greatest evil, as which makes him remove from the true remedy and from a solid consolation, and which lulls him asleep as to his own miseries.*

* On this subject I find very solid reflections in the *thoughts* of the celebrated Paschal.

"Choose," says he, "whatever condition of life you please, let all the goods and satisfactions, which seem to be calculated to render man perfectly happy, be united together in that condition; if he that is placed in that post, be left without diversion and amusement, and if you leave him likewise to reflect upon what he is; this languid felicity will not be capable of keeping up his spirits; he will fall upon the torturing thoughts of futurity, and if his mind be not taken up with some external thing, from that moment, I pledge myself, he is necessarily unhappy. Is not the royal or imperial dignity of itself great enough to constitute him happy, who possesses it? Will it be necessary to divert him like the rabble from the thought of his exalted situation? I am aware that, what renders a man happy, is to withdraw him from the sight of his domestic miseries, in order to fill his mind with the concern to dance well; but will this likwise be the case with a sovereign? And will he be more happy, in attaching himself to such insignificant vanities and trifles, than at the sight of his greatness? What more satisfactory object could be held out to his mind? Would it not be to disturb his joy, to occupy his mind, in adapting his steps to the beating of an arietta, and striking a ball with address instead of letting him enjoy in peace the glory and majesty that surrounds him? Let the trial be made, let a king be left alone without any gratification of the senses, without any chagrin in his mind, without company, leave him all the leisure to think on himself, and to occupy all the activity of his mind in this thought, and it will be found that even a king is a man full of misery and that he feels it as much as any other man. Hence it is, that so many persons take pleasure in games, hunting, and other pastimes, which occupy their whole soul; not, indeed,

SECTION XII.

XXXIX. Reflection is natural to man, and it is one of those sublime prerogatives, which embellish and distinguish him from the rest of the sublunary creation. Man thinks, and he is naturally led to reflect, on all the creatures that surround him, on all beings, on which his senses can anywise grasp, he feels himself naturally impelled, to search after, to see, to observe and examine every thing that is upon earth or in heaven, even the immensity of space, as far as the activity of his mind can possibly extend. Man wishes to see every thing, to undertake every thing, to know every thing: but man wishes to see every thing, *except himself*, to observe every thing, *except his own nature*, wishes to know every thing, *except his own heart*. Man is delighted and takes pleasure at every sight, at every discovery, at every outward observation: but as to himself, *he hates even to behold himself*. Such a truth, to be discovered, does not stand in need of reasoning. It is enough to observe man, and to observe him even superficially, in order not to be able to doubt of it. Present man with the most frivolous object of diversion or entertainment, with an object which can draw him from the consideration of himself, and behold! how he is taken with it, how he rivets himself to it, how he is lost in it! Again, present him to himself, and behold! How he is disconcerted, how he turns himself every way, how he is wearied! Is not this the voice of nature, an undeniable sentiment of his misery? He cannot bear to behold himself, because when he views himself, he does not find himself conformable to that innate idea of order which he carries within himself indelibly impressed on his

as if, in fact, there were any felicity in what one may gain at such games, nor as if any one were to imagine, that there is any true happiness in what is at stake; no, if such a thing were advanced, it would immediately be refuted and gainsayed: men love bustle, tumult, distraction, because it keeps them from reflecting on themselves; but this kind of diversion would be, assuredly, incapable of occupying the mind of man, if he had not lost the sentiment and taste of the true and real good, and if he were not full of baseness, vanity, and levity."

soul. Is it not a fact, that he feels disgusted at discordant music? Is it not likewise true that every deformed object, every object out of all proportion, causes in him such a disagreeable sensation, that it makes him turn aside with horror and shut his eyes? Thus he hates to see himself, he flies from seeing himself more than from hearing the most disagreeable cacophony, more than from looking at any object however ugly, deformed, and disproportioned it may be: why so? Because his nature is more deranged, more disproportioned, more discordant, and more out of order, than any other discordance, disproportion, or deformity. Let us take things rightly, I repeat it, that man recoils with horror from beholding himself, for no other reason, but because he cannot bear the sight of his own miseries. Let us dive into the matter, and we shall find that this is his only motive, and that man, properly speaking, feels no abhorrence to see himself, but to see himself *such as he is: miserable and unhappy.*—Get this man to contemplate those traits of beauty, which make known to him his greatness and sovereignty over other creatures, make him sensible of the elevation, of the penetration and the strength of that being, that is thinking within him, show him that he is the most astonishing work of the Supreme Creator, and that his soul is designed not only to have the sway over many creatures, but moreover, that it is superior, by its very nature, to the whole material universe: tell him that he was immediately created by God, and that the same God preserves and protects him as his darling, as the object of his tender love and complacency, tell him, in fine, that he is and shall always be immortal, and you will see that man pay the greatest attention, you will see him delighted, interrogating himself and full of interest. But when you come to leave him alone amidst darkness and confusion, when you cause him to feel the state of his degradation, it is then, you will read in his countenance a certain ennui, a weariness, a dejection, and you will see him looking out for diversion to rid himself of so disagreeable an impression: he is, therefore, miserable and if there were no other proof to show his miseries, this

very unnatural alienation from himself, this secret abhorrence he experiences at seeing himself, would be an argument sufficiently strong, a too sincere and too convincing a voice, that he is miserable, naturally disordered, and unhappy.

SECTION XIII.

XL. *Conclusion.*

From this general inclination to vanity, perceivable in all men, and from the general want of reflection on the state of their nature, from the abhorrence they have, and which is so natural to them all, to view themselves and their interior, we, by our observations, have been led to deduce their misery. Man, therefore, is miserable, and such he is proved to be, not by certain strained exaggerations, which might be attributed to some sad or melancholy humour, or by some trifling details of his extrinsic evils, which, at times, either are not real, or may be avoided; but, by the very nature of the spirit that is in man, and which, whilst it abhors the view of itself, knows and discovers itself to be void of real good, and full of misery and vanity. Any man, that is gifted with a sufficient penetration, feels thoroughly the whole strength and weight of such a demonstration; but we cannot say as much of so many other men, who do not possess such an extent of understanding, nor so refined a taste. Shall we say to these, and, by making a new effort, prove to them, that man is miserable? They would not understand us, they would not feel the force of our demonstrations. Shall we then be under the necessity of causing that long train of intrinsic evils, which infest the very essence of human nature, that natural ignorance, that torpor, that effervescense and impetuosity of those unbridled passions, those interior conflicts and contradictions, that strong tendency to vice, and that abhorrence from virtue, to pass in review before them? Shall we be obliged to display before them the evils which surround them, plagues, famine, war, earthquakes, burnings, and tempests; those painful sensations to which, in such a variety of ways their body is subject, and so many other

and so great evils; so many and so great dangers? This would be a very long way, and would be, in part at least, superfluous for those who are already convinced by the above demonstrations, and irksome to all, because this would be treating of evils, which men in general experience, which they would wish not to experience, or which, at least, they would wish not to know that they suffer. Let us, therefore, accommodate ourselves both to the one and to the other; let us strike out a middle road, and let us try to make them feel, as it were, with their hands, the unhappiness of all men.

XLI. We shall single out, from the numberless evils that afflict all mankind, only one, but one that is great, that is general and common to all, and that is inevitable; which, because great, is of itself alone sufficient to lay open to view the degradation, the misery of man, and which, because general and common to all, will admit of no exception, and which, in fine, because inevitable, will teach us, that man is not only miserable, but that he is so by nature, because he is, in no manner whatever, able to escape his miseries. This great evil consists in the *necessity of the right of property;* that is to say, of the *mine* and *thine*, those cold words which, according to the saying of St. John Chrysostom,* cause to rush in upon the world, all the evils that afflict it. If we show that this evil is truly great, truly general, truly real, and, if we make it appear, that, in order to take away this evil from the world, it would be absolutely necessary to change the very nature of man, then we shall have demonstrated that man is miserable, and miserable by nature.†

* In Oratione de S. Philog. tom. 3.

† In order to leave no manner of doubt of our sentiments on a subject, which, at this day, justly demands a very great circumspection, I thought proper to forewarn my readers to this effect, that, whilst I am about to treat of the goods of fortune, he may not begin to think, that I have a mind to destroy those natural rights, which, in the *present state of man*, must be considered as sacred, inviolable, and necessary, as sanctioned, too, by Almighty God, in a particular manner, from those words of the Decalogue, "furtum non facies," "thou shalt not steal." I shall make it appear, it is true, that, according to *the exigency in the orignal state of man*, property is against the right, which nature gives to every man; that the said property is the sole and only true source

SECTION XIV.

XLII. *Man is out of his true and natural state.*

Does not the dignity of man, his dominion over the earth, his sovereignty over all terrestrial and inferior creatures, a sovereignty of all others the most natural, the most worthy, and the most deserved, belong to man by nature, and precisely because he is *man*, and for no other reason but because he is *man?* If this be the case, then every man is, by nature, born the sovereign of innumerable inferior beings which surround him. Every man was invested by the common Creator with this most honourable and useful sovereignty, and every man has a right to the homage and services of those creatures that are placed below him. But if the extent and right to this natural sovereignty does belong to man, for no other reason but because he is *man*, then the extent and right to this sovereignty belongs, *and is equally due*, to all men. Therefore, all men are actually and in reality so many equal sovereigns, established to preside and rule equally and indifferently over the inferior creation.*

Behold a truth, which opens to our eyes a scene truly extensive, truly charming, and truly new! Behold a truth, which displays a perspective, that raises, that enlivens, that astonishes our mind!

But if all men be equally sovereigns and lords over the inferior creatures, then all men have an equal right to the ser-

of almost all those evils, which constitute the unhappy lot of all mankind; but I shall likewise show, that this great evil is without remedy, because it originates in a disorder that is intrinsic to man. I shall prove that, to take away the right of property in the goods of fortune, would be the baneful source of evils infinitely greater, of evils almost incalculable: it would be the utter destruction of society, and would totally overturn all order, and the politico-moral state of man. This necessary forewarning, which will not stop my readers at the following paragraphs, will set the rectitude of my intentions beyond the possibility of a doubt or suspicion.

* "And he [God] said: Let us make man to our image and likeness: and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moves upon the earth." Genesis, i. 26.

vices of them, an incontestable right, founded on their very nature, a right of which they cannot be deprived by any one, except that Supreme Being that has bestowed it upon them. Such a truth, which awakens man from his lethargy, and which equalises the slave in chains to the proud and triumphant tyrant upon the throne, directly leads to an equal participation of the fruits of the goods of fortune, which are nothing else but the services of inferior creatures. This equal distribution of the services of inferior creatures, not only because it is conformable to the fulness of the rights of man, but also because it establishes all mankind in a kind of natural and becoming felicity; this equal distribution, I say, is according to the natural exigency of man; for man was assuredly created and established in the fulness of his rights, and in a state of natural and competent felicity. But if this equal distribution of the services of the inferior creatures be according to the natural exigency, or, what is tantamount, be the true and natural state of man, and if men neither do nor can enjoy, (as we shall see,) *at present*, this equal distribution, men, therefore, are not, *at present*, according to their natural exigency, or, what is the same, they are not in their true natural state, to which the Author of Nature raised them.

That state which places men under a true and real impotency to enjoy, in all their extent, those rights which belong to *men as men*, is not the true and natural state of man.

But the state which excludes an equal distribution of the services of the inferior creatures, or an equivalent to that distribution, puts man under a true and real impotency of enjoying, in their full extent, those rights which were given to him as *man*.

Therefore, the state which excludes an equal distribution of the services of inferior creatures, or an equivalent to the same distribution, is not the true and natural state of man.

Again, a state which does not establish man in a certain natural felicity, is not the true and natural state of man.

But the state, which does not admit of an equal distribution of the services of the inferior creatures, or of an equivalent

to the same, does not establish man in a certain natural felicity, as far as it is attainable upon earth.

Therefore, this state is not the true and natural state of man. Now I ask you, is man in that state, in which he ought naturally to be? Or, is he in his true and natural state? Let us observe, for a moment, the political, the moral order of men.

I see that many have raised themselves above great numbers of their fellow-creatures, and that they arrogate to themselves a true and exclusive dominion over the inferior creatures. That is *mine*, say some, pointing out immense quantities of grain, and stock: the services of all these creatures, says another, belong to me only; these forests are *mine*, and no man besides me has a right to the crop of those fields. On the other hand, I find almost a countless multitude of men, who have neither woods nor fields; who see themselves reduced to drag out their lives amidst want, privations, and distress, and to humble themselves before others, to beg, to work hard, and to run eternally after those who enjoy dominion over the inferior creatures, and who proudly rule the earth.

This is the state, in which all mankind are really placed; but this state does not admit of an equal distribution of the services of the inferior creatures, therefore, man is not in his true and natural state.

If, by an hypothesis only abstractedly considered, a beggar were to reclaim his natural and primitive rights, and were to maintain, that he has as much claim to the services of subordinate creatures, as the rest of mankind, he would establish his cause upon the ground that his nature is in nowise different from that of all other men.

The rich and the possessor, might, indeed, answer, that these possessions and this produce of their lands, are the price of the sweat and industry of their ancestors, and that the forefathers of those, who are now deprived of them, had to-

tally relinquished all their rights, and that, of course, they lawfully hold possession.

But, to tell the truth, if the matter be considered *in its origin and in itself*, (prescinding always, as above observed, from the actual state of man,) we shall find, that justice and right would manifestly be in favour of the beggar, for he might reply to the rich possessor, From whom did you get the proprietorship of these possessions? From my ancestors. But who were these your ancestors? They were men. But man was not placed upon earth to be the lord thereof, but for the time only he was to live upon it; how then could they who had but the *usus fructus*, transmit to you a right of property which they had not? This was done by a reciprocal agreement among men. But who made such an agreement? Our forefathers. And how could they make it? How could they deprive their descendants of a right which belongs to them as *men?* Or were the first men, indeed, designed to be the perpetual lords of the earth? I do not see that the Supreme Being and Creator has anywise distinguished the first from the last; therefore, I repeat it, reason would seem to be on the side of the poor, and the right of property in the goods of fortune against the natural and primeval rights of man.

SECTION XV.

XLIII. *Continuation.*

Let us continue our observations, and for a moment investigate the effects produced by this disorderly and unjust right of property in the politico-moral state of man. Here, then, we have arrived at a multitude of combinations, at an extensive and deep investigation of numerous experimental truths. What do we discover? What benefit does this right of exclusive property bring to mankind? Does it even render one part of men happy? I evidently perceive, I experimentally

understand, that this system of exclusive property is the occasion and baneful cause of almost all the evils, which afflict mankind. Let us penetrate to the very bottom of things, and not stop at their surface. Whence originate cabals, intrigues, frauds, deceits, enmities, hatreds, strifes, murders ?* From what source do fears, pretensions, wars, and so many other evils spring, which render mankind miserable and unhappy at all times, in all places, in all situations? Most unquestionably, for the most part, from this system of the right of property in the goods of fortune. Men hope, fear, flatter, hate, mistrust, intrigue, quarrel, kill, wage war, for no other purpose, but to add a trifle to their property, and to raise themselves a little higher above other men. This man has one means, that man has another; this one makes use of this pretext, that of another; this one hides his covetousness, and that one shows it openly; and in the interim they injure each other, supplant each other, and run all headlong to the same end, which all cannot possibly obtain, and which, finally, renders them all miserable and unhappy; those, because they have not compassed it, and these, because they have.

SECTION XVI.

XLIV. *The conclusion is, that man is out of his true and natural state.*

We have viewed the true and real state of the politico-moral order of men. What is it but a prospect of injustice, of confusion, of disorder, of misery; a prospect which opens to our view the blindness, the wanderings, and the universal corruption of mankind. If, therefore, we have found men in a state, which

* "From whence are wars and contentions among you? Come they not hence? From your concupiscences, which war in your members? You covet, and have not: you kill, and envy, and cannot obtain: you contend and war: and you have not." St. James, iv. 1.

excludes an equal partition of the services of the inferior creatures of the world, or an equivalent of this partition, we have, therefore, not found them in their true and natural state, because we have not found them in the possession of their rights.

If we have found men in a state which does not establish them in a kind of natural felicity, we have not discovered them in their true and natural state, because we have not found them as happy as they naturally ought to be. Nay, if we have found them in a state opposite to that equal partition of the services of the inferior creatures, or to an equivalent of such an equal partition; if we have found them in a state of misery and trouble, far distant from, and opposite to, that natural felicity which is due to them, we have consequently found them in a state far distant from, and opposite to, their competent and natural state, and, of course, out of their proper order, out of their natural collocation, in a state of injustice, of ignorance, of ruin, and of misery.

SECTION XVII.

XLV. *Man, even if he wished, cannot return to his true and natural state.*

Since all men are so wretched, and since the great mass of their miseries is occasioned by this system of exclusive property, it seems to me I hear them say, why do you not, ye sovereigns of the world, ye philosophers of the earth, unite to find out means of banishing this ill-fated property, and of restoring all men to that equality, which naturally is due to them?*

* We are here speaking of an equality of the fruits of the goods, called the goods of fortune, or of the services of inferior creatures, but, by no means, of an equality, which takes away all dependence and subordination. The *true and natural state of man*, which requires, that all men should, according

Why do you not raise your voice, employ your reason and your force, to regenerate entirely all mankind? Was there ever a project formed more useful, more just, more glorious? It is perhaps impossible, but how impossible!*

Let us suppose, for a moment, that all men, some by threats, some by reasoning, others again by force, be finally prevailed upon to return to their true natural state: behold then all men equally receiving the homage of the inferior creatures, and congratulating each other on their common sovereignty. Meadows, fields, fisheries, animals, &c. no longer belong to one man only, but to the whole society at large; behold beggary and superfluity at last banished, and all men placed under a system of reciprocal assistance, of concord, of love, and of peace! What a beautiful prospect! But what! Is it not true, that all individuals are bound to contribute honestly, and as far as they are able, to the general good of society, and to the particular welfare of their own department? But what is the reason, that in this system, that judge, who is charged to watch over the good order of the community, is softly prolonging his sleep more than his office will allow, and more than he was used to do before? What is the reason that that husbandman, that farmer, or planter, who had an hundred eyes, and an hundred hands, to gather the harvest, and is now in the same line of business, yawning all the day, loitering away his time in idleness, and seemingly unwilling to put his hands to any thing? The reason is manifestly this, because

to their wants and employments in society, equally enjoy the services of the inferior creatures, requires likewise that, among them, as social beings, there should reign proper order and reciprocal dependence, without which, it does not seem possible, that any society whatever could subsist.

* We shall not find, at any time, in all the revolutions of states, in all the most terrible popular seditions, that any one in his senses ever attempted or projected to abolish the right of property, because every one is sensible of the impossibility of such a project. Let us not confound matters. The Agrarian laws, which were once projected, but not executed, subdivided the property, but did not annul or abrogate its claims.

the judge, in the former system, hoped to advance and increase his own property, through the applause of his fellow-men, and to live with more comfort than others; but now he is satisfied with saving appearances, because he is sensible that his comforts will increase but little or not at all, whether he fully discharge his duty or not; because the comforts, which he now enjoys, he enjoys for the most part, because he is *man*, not because he is *judge*. And that husbandman, who formerly was so busy and so indefatigable, when he was supported by the hope of procuring a better livelihood for his family, and of increasing his own substance above his neighbours, deems it now enough for him to save appearances, because he is aware that, if he can make it appear to the community that he does what he is absolutely bound to do, the mediocrity of his pleasures, and of his comforts, will not be curtailed.

But the judge is much concerned that the cultivator should do his duty, in order to enjoy more abundantly the fruits that are collected in the society, and the cultivator of lands is not less concerned, that the judge should fully comply with his charge, in order that, in proper time and place, he may receive that portion of emoluments, that falls to his lot in the society. But neither the one, nor the other, would wish to do his own duty; and, if they do it in part, they do it against their will; they set about it for form sake, but they do not feel a strong inclination to do it.

But the principle of duty, that principle which should govern all rational beings? The principle of duty has scarcely any influence whatever on the heart of man: the law of personal interest is what rules him, what masters him.

But how does it come to pass, that the principle of duty has scarcely any power on the heart of man, and that the law of personal interest governs and masters him altogether? This is a subversion of natural order; but, pray, let us not lose sight of our survey. What do we behold? We behold, that most men reciprocally act, as we have seen the above judge and husbandman act: In a word, they would wish that

every body else should do his duty, because they feel interested that this should be so, but they do not wish to comply with their own, because they find no interest in complying with it? What is the result of this? The result?—I see that, by little and little every one retires—society is disbanded—and men have again returned to their former state, to a state of personal and exclusive property, to a state of corruption and misery; therefore there is no medium, no remedy: man is necessarily and naturally miserable. But why is he thus miserable? The reason of it is, because he cannot remain in the felicity of his true and natural state. But why can he not remain in the felicity of his true and natural state? Because the law of personal interest, contrary to all order, domineers in his heart, over the rule of duty; because man is corrupted and disordered, and it is, precisely, because he is corrupted and disordered, that he cannot remain in his true and natural state, and he is, of course, by necessity, in the midst of misery and degradation, of injustice and oppression.

All the systems of philosophers, all the efforts of the united sovereigns of the earth, in fine, the unanimous consent of mankind, will never be able to re-establish and consolidate all men in their true natural state, or even in a due state of felicity.

We have, moreover, seen, that in the present hypothesis, however this system of the right of property be contrary to the natural state of men, still it cannot, in any manner whatever, be abolished, and if men were to attempt to abrogate it, the evils, that would thence ensue, would be incomparably greater than those which it produces, and, of course, it is needful to make use of it as a necessary preservative against an infinity of miseries, the first of which would be a total dissolution of society; but from this it does not follow, that it is not an evil, and an evil the more sensibly felt, because unavoidable.

The only means of establishing mankind in their primitive order, would be to prevent the law of personal interest from prevailing over the rule of duty, and to cause the rule of duty to

be in unison with the law of personal interest. They should naturally support each other after such a manner, that every duty of man should always terminate in the evident interest of the same man, and every interest of man should terminate in the performance of his duty. Then all mankind would happily move in their true and natural state: but to re-establish such an equilibrium is impossible, except to Him alone, who can change the heart of man and regenerate it. This disorder, this inward corruption is, therefore, the sole reason of the greatest part of the miseries of man.

[*To be continued.*]

UNITARIANISM

PHILOSOPHICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY EXAMINED.

No. III.

SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Section xviii.

XLV. *What has brought this great evil on Mankind?*

I reflect, whence so great a corruption, such a dismal disorder, so universal and total a derangement should have come upon all mankind; but I find nothing positive that can tranquilize and satisfy my mind. One thing I clearly understand, and it is this: that I have not assuredly received this corruption, this ruin from my Creator, from God; first, because I clearly perceive the basis of that happy, true, and natural state, which is proper to man, and which nature does not cease, although in vain, to reclaim and to point out; and next, because it is evidently repugnant, that rational beings created by God, should have received from the same God an intrinsic corruption and perverseness, which, besides its being contrary to order, vilifies man, degrades him, and withdraws him from God, and makes him, in a certain measure, opposed to God, and contrary to the essential perfection of God. But if it be not from God, I cannot conceive, how a created being of a different nature can act upon another external independent being, and thus ruin the work of the Supreme Creator; or next, why the disastrous consequences ought not rather to fall back upon the mischievous corruptor than upon innocent man. I cannot, I say, reconcile these things; and much less can I reconcile the justice and providence of a Supreme God with the innocency and misery of man.

God, provident and just, and man, miserable and innocent: these two ideas cannot stand together, they evidently contradict each other.

It is certainly clearer than noon-day, that God rules and governs all his creatures with an admirable providence; it is clear likewise, that God, the uncreated justice itself, can neither intend nor permit, such afflictions and penalties to befal his creatures, as are inevitable and con-natural to them, when those creatures are innocent.

It is proved, to a demonstration, that man is necessarily and inevitably in the midst of troubles, of labours, of miseries; it is, therefore, likewise certain and self-evident, that man is not innocent.

But how! Man not innocent? Behold here another rock! Man is corrupted; and, precisely because he is corrupted, on account of that corruption, as we have seen, he is miserable. He, therefore, is not innocent, in this his corruption; he, therefore, must have had no hand in that natural disorder, in that inward derangement of himself; but I know, for certain, that I have not, in any wise, contributed to this my corruption; and I know, too, that I have brought this corruption, and the penalty and chastisement of it, together with my existence into this world: how, then, am I, how are all other men, guilty of this corruption? Every action necessarily supposes an agent. If, therefore, I—if all other men, my fellow-creatures, did not exist prior to this general and individual corruption, how is it possible that we should have concurred in it? How, then, does it come, that man is not innocent?

XLVI. I well perceive, that a state of the pre-existence of our souls, before our bodies may be supposed, it might perhaps be said, that, in such a state, our souls had lost their innocence, and concurred to their natural ruin.* But besides the con-

* So thought many ancient philosophers, and, generally, all those of the Platonic and Pythagorean sects. They, penetrating to the inmost recess of human nature by dint of their deep meditations, and clearly discovering that man was not such as he ought to be, could not extricate themselves in any other way, than by forming and maintaining the above supposition. St. Aug. &c.

sideration that the hypothesis is but a mere gratuitous supposition, I conceive it to be very improbable; because, it seems to me altogether impossible, that *all* these souls, without excepting a single one, should have lost their innocence, and should have co-operated towards the intrinsic ruin of *all* mankind, and that not only *all* should have lost their innocence, and concurred to that common ruin, but that all should have lost it, and that all should have co-operated towards it, *in the same degree, and after the same manner*, because it is obvious, that all men, of all ages, of all nations, and of all climes, are born substantially the same, with the same tendencies, with the same passions, with the same corruption. How, then, and after what manner, does it come to pass, that man is not innocent? I know not: every thing presents itself wrapt up in an impenetrable obscurity, my ideas are bewildered and confounded.

I, therefore, raise my voice and exclaim: man is not innocent! How was thy work spoiled, O! Lord? What share had I in my corruption? When did I lose my innocence? Is there any remedy for me? What shall become of me? Of whom shall I ask the unravelling of mysteries so obscure, so important, so decisive of my eternal lot? Nature is silent, and I find myself in obscurity and confusion.

But whilst thus surrounded on all sides with awful darkness, a divine ray, suddenly breaking through the dark cloud, beams down upon my depressed soul, and informs me, that it is reve-

St. Augustin thus relates their opinion: (Lib. 4, contra Julian, cap. ult.) "Hujus evidentia miseriæ, Gentium philosophos, nihil de peccato primi hominis sive scientes, sive credentes, compulit dicere, ob aliqua scelera suscepta in vita superiore pœnarum luendarum causa nos esse natos, et animos nostros corruptibilibus corporibus, eo supplicio, quo Hetrusci prædones captos affligere consueverant, tanquam vivos cum mortuis esse conjunctos."

"The sight of this undeniable misery of man, brought the Gentile philosophers, who were either ignorant of the sin of the first man, or who believed nothing of it, to say, that we are born for the purpose of atoning for the crimes committed in a former life, and that our souls are united to corruptible bodies, and thus are punished with nearly the same kind of chastisement, as the Hetrusians were used to inflict on highway-men, in tying them alive to dead bodies."

lation only that can furnish men with the clue to this mystery; a mystery, the existence of which, reason alone, manifested by divine revelation, as we have seen hitherto, establishes nearly beyond the possibility of a doubt, but the development of which is reserved to the religion of Jesus Christ only: reason proves, I might almost say, to a demonstration, that man is not such as he was created; that he is not such as he ought to be; that he is not in his true and primitive state; and, what is still more, that he cannot possibly return to it; that he is miserable and necessarily, and inevitably miserable, and that, of course, his nature has been disordered, spoiled, and corrupted. Revelation steps in, and, favouring us with a light, which in vain we expected to derive from nature, clearly points out to us, after what manner this universal disorder, the source of all our evils, was brought upon the unhappy children of Adam. "Wherefore, (says she by the mouth of the Apostle,) as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death: and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned," St. Paul, Epist. ad Rom. cap. 5, v. 12.

XLVII. *General objection against the above dissertation, derived from the possibility of the state of pure nature.*

I see not what can be objected against the above dissertation, except it be, that, from the mode of reasoning, which runs through the whole, there would follow too much, and, of course, according to the maxims of the schools, nothing: for the preceding observations might seem to show, that, what is called by divines, *the state of pure nature*, that is to say, that state in which men would not have been elevated to a supernatural end or felicity, is impossible, and that God could not have created man such as he is at present.

This objection, however plausible it might appear at first sight, will dwindle away by the following explanatory remarks: 1st. Therefore, we maintain, that, from the preceding mode of reasoning, it can, by no means, be inferred, that God could not have created man in the state of *pure nature*, and that it is so far from our intention to deny the possibility of that state,

that, on the contrary, we solemnly make profession of believing, that the present elevation of human nature, *to a supernatural destination, to the possession of God by the beatific vision*, was no wise due to human nature, and that it must be considered as a special and gratuitous benefit of the divine bounty, not as a natural appendage due to the exigency of the nature of man; accordingly, we most readily believe and grant, that God, instead of creating man immortal, and exempt from miseries, such as he created Adam, might have created him subject to death and to the other miseries of this life; nay, we go still farther, and sincerely declare it to be our firm impression, that we do not conceive it to be, absolutely speaking, repugnant to the perfections of God, even to create man subject, in some degree, to *rebellious* concupiscence, which the creator might permit in the nature of man, for the wise purpose of affording him an opportunity of increasing his merit; but what we deny with the best philosophers and divines, and what sound reason itself denies, as appears from the above discussion, is this: that God, consistently, not only with his absolute power, but also with his infinite wisdom, goodness, and sanctity, could have created man, such as he is now, viz: not only subject to death and to the other evils of this world, but also and chiefly *such as he ought not to be, and in a manner opposite to what he ought to be*, that is to say: with such a mass of moral corruption and disorder, as he brings with him into the world, with such a violent inclination to evil, and such an utter abhorrence from the practice of virtue; with such a furious rebellion of the flesh, which, as the Apostle laments, (Epist. ad Rom. 7, v. 7,) drags him, as it were by force, to do the evil which he would not wish to do, and not to do the good which he would wish to do. With such a contradiction to himself, with such an opposition to his last end, in fine, with such a mass of intrinsic corruption, man, we think, could not come from the hands of that Supreme Creator, who is wisdom, sanctity, and purity itself.*

* The degradation of man is more strikingly discoverable in such as are deprived of the light of religion, and its salutary lessons. In the savages, for

Τις γαρ καθαρος εσται απο ρυπου; αλλ'ουθεις, εαν ᾖ μια ημερα ο βιος αυτου επι της γης. Job, ch. xiv. ver. 4, 5.

For who shall be free from filth? Not one, indeed, even should his life be but one day upon the earth.

SECTION I.

XLVIII. *Original Sin irrefragably demonstrated from Revelation.*

From our preceding remarks and observations on the corrupted state of human nature, in which the light of reason alone was our only guide, our readers will now be able to form their judgment of the correctness of the Unitarian system, which solemnly professes not to believe "that the guilt of Adam's sin was imputed, and his corrupted nature conveyed to all his posterity, nor that there is in men any original corruption, whereby they are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil."* In the present discussion we shall examine this important matter in the sanctuary of religion, and attentively (logic always in hand,) inquire, whether the voice of revelation be not as loud in proclaiming the existence of original sin, as we have observed that of sound reason to be in support of it.

example, who are naturally and almost insuperably stupid and wicked. Do not children every moment give sensible marks of their natural and innate perversity? "I have seen, says St. Augustine, a child, who could not yet talk, and who, already with a pale countenance and sparkling eyes, looked at the infant, who suckled with him at the breast. There have been children seen to die of hatred and jealousy, because they perceived the family increased by a brother or a sister. If man is born good, how did he become wicked? By bad example, they will say, by bad education; but this supposes the corruption already existing. In fine, look at those brutal debaucheries, those monstrous refinements of crime, those horrid furies followed by the waste of the body and death, &c. and you will be forced to confess, that man is not such as he ought to be, or as he came out of the hands of his creator, but such as he made himself by sin.

* Unitarian Miscellany and Christian Monitor, No. I, page 19.

FUNDAMENTAL DOGMA OF REVELATION.

There exists an Original Sin, which is transfused by way of natural generation, from Adam into his posterity.

This fundamental tenet, on which the whole system of divine revelation is hinged as upon its basis, is irrefragably demonstrated, 1st, from the divine scriptures of both the old and new law; 2d, from the authority and uniform consent of the holy fathers and ecclesiastical writers of the primitive ages of the church; 3d, from the universality of the death of Christ for all men; 4th, from the constant and uniform belief and practice of the church of Christ, which is evinced, 1st, from the councils which condemned the Pelagian heresy in the fourth century; 2d, from the nature of baptism; 3d, from the necessity of baptism; 4th, from the ceremonies of baptism. In adducing and developing these proofs, I shall endeavour to be as brief as possible.

SECTION II.

XLIX. *Original Sin proved from the sacred volumes of both the Old and New Dispensation.*

FIRST PROOF FROM THE DIVINE SCRIPTURES.

In the book of Job we read these words: "Who can make him clean, that is conceived of unclean seed? Is it not thou who only art?"* This text is thus rendered by the Septuagint: "For who shall be free from filth? Not one, indeed, even should his life be but one day upon the earth."† The Hebrew text has manifestly the same meaning with the version of the Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate, for thus we read in the Hebrew: "Who shall give a clean from an unclean? Not one." That is to say, not one is clean. Whence I thus argue: The holy prophet does certainly not mean to be here

* "Quis potest facere mundum, de immundo conceptum semine? nonne tu qui solus es?" Job, xiv. 4.

† Τίς γαρ καθᾶρος εςαι ἀπὸ ῥυπȣ; αλλ' ουθεὶς, Εαν καὶ μία ἡμέρα ὁ βιος αὐτου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Versio Sept. Interp.

understood of the bodily uncleanness of children, which can be washed away by men, but of the filthiness of sin; not of personal sin, of which infants, from the want of the use of reason, are incapable, but of original sin, which filthiness God alone can cleanse; therefore, all men are born in original sin.

L. The second passage is taken from the fiftieth Psalm, (fifty-first, Protestant Bible,) 7th verse: "For behold! I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me." The Greek text literally agrees with the Vulgate; whence we may form this argument: the holy prophet does not assuredly speak of the sin which his parents had committed in begetting him; for David was born neither of an adulterous connexion, nor by fornication, but in lawful and holy wedlock; and no one, I am sure, will pretend that the right use of lawful matrimony is in any wise sinful. David, therefore, cannot be understood to allude to any sin of his parents, but to a sin which he contracted in his very conception, and which he received with his very nature. The very drift of this whole Psalm evidently shows that no other interpretation can here be admitted: for it is obvious, that the object of the prophet throughout this whole Psalm was to allege all the motives he could find, by which he might appease his God, and incline him to have pity on him. Now, for that purpose, it is not, assuredly, the sins of his parents he ought to have recounted, but rather his own misery, and, of course, the sin in which he was conceived. Add to this, that the Hebrew text repels any interpretation, that would distort this passage from the meaning of original sin, to the sin of parents, for the Hebrew word *cholalti*, in the first member of the text, by no means signifies the moment of his first conception, but the formation of the body in the mother's womb, or the animation of the fœtus; and it is of this vital and formal conception, or what is tantamount, of the infusion of the soul into the body, David speaks, when he says, that he was conceived in iniquities. Next, the other Hebrew word, *yechemathni*, in the second member of the text, does not properly mean, *beget*, or

generate, but to *warm*, to *foster*, to *nourish*, which can only apply to the action of the mother, who warms, fosters, and nourishes the child, after its conception. The native signification of the original text forces us, therefore, to admit that David is by no means here speaking of the sins, his parents might have committed in the use of marriage, but of the sin which he contracted at the moment he began to be a man, a child of Adam; that is to say, at the moment his soul was united to his body, in which union, it is obvious, parents can have no share.

To him that would feel disposed to cavil on the words, *sins*, *iniquities*, being expressed in the plural number, we would answer, that original sin, although one in its origin, is as multiplied as the children of Adam themselves are, and that that sin may be very properly called *sins*, *iniquities*, for two reasons, first, because not one only, but several sins, such as pride, infidelity, disobedience, occurred in the sin of our first parents; and next, because this sin is the source of so many others in his descendants. In fine, the Hebrew text, at once, solves the difficulty, if there were any, by putting *sin* and *iniquity*, in the singular number, as it appears from the inspection of the text just quoted.

Secondly. Let us now open the sacred volumes of the New-Testament, and see whether the Unitarians can possibly resist that flood of light which they throw upon this important truth.

Many, and most conclusive, are the testimonies which the sacred writings of the new law afford in support of original sin; but, for brevity's sake, we shall confine ourselves exclusively to what the great Apostle of the Gentiles has left in his Epistle on this subject.

LI. In his Epistle to the Romans, 3d chap. verse 23, he speaks thus, "For all have sinned, and do need the glory of God."* If *all* have sinned, infants must have assuredly sinned too; but infants could not have done, by their own physi-

* "Omnes enim peccaverunt et egent gloria Dei." Vulg.

cal will, any thing, either good or bad, as the same Apostle observes in his Epistle to the Romans, 9th chapter; they must, therefore, have sinned, because they are the children of him "in whom all have sinned." Epis. ad Rom. v.

LII. In the same Epistle, 5th chap. verse 12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death: so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned."*— Whence I argue thus: All have sinned in one man, Adam; therefore, also, children: not actually, of course, originally. Again: by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin, death; and so death passed upon all men, that is to say, that sin made all men subject to death; therefore, as children are as subject to death as other men, they have sinned with all other men in Adam; otherwise, how could death have passed upon them, which "did not enter the world but through sin," according to the Apostle? which is also confirmed by these other words of the Apostle, 6th chapter, verse 23, "For the wages of sin is death."† If so, then children have also sinned, for children also die. If they had not sinned in Adam, how could they receive the wages of sin, *death?*

LIII. The following passage, from the second Epistle to the Corinthians, 5th chapter, verse 14, is not less pointed: "Judging this, that if one died for all, then all were dead, and Christ died for all."‡ The argument of the Apostle is this: If Christ died for all, then all were dead, and, of course, also infants; but Christ died for all, therefore all were dead, and, consequently, infants also: but they were not dead by personal or actual sin, of which they are incapable; therefore, by original sin.

And let no one say, that the Apostle in the above passages is speaking, not of the death of the soul, but of that of the body; for nothing can be more contrary to the meaning of

* "Propterea sicut per unum hominem peccatum in hunc mundum intravit, et per peccatum mors, et ita in omnes homines mors pertransiit, in quo omnes peccaverunt." Vulg.

† "Stipendium peccati mors est."

‡ "Quoniam si unus pro omnibus mortuus est, ergo omnes mortui sunt, et pro omnibus mortuus est Christus."

the Apostle, than such an arbitrary interpretation, as it will be obvious to any one that will give himself the trouble to read the whole 5th chapter of St. Paul to the Romans, quoted above, in which the Apostle forms a perpetual antithesis between the death, that passed upon all men by the disobedience of Adam, and the life, which men receive through the obedience of Christ; as, therefore, the life, which is through Christ, chiefly and directly relates to the life of the soul, or to sanctifying grace, so likewise that death, which is through Adam, chiefly and principally regards the death of the soul, that is to say, *sin*.

LIV. The last quotation I shall adduce, is from the Epistle to the Ephesians, 2d chapter, 3d verse: "We were by nature the children of wrath, even as the rest."* Why, by *nature* children of wrath, but because from our very birth, or from the nature of our first parents, defiled by sin, we contract the guilt of sin, by which we become subject to the divine wrath?

SECTION III.

LV. *Original Sin evinced from the authority and uniform consent of the Holy Fathers, and other ecclesiastical writers of the primitive ages of the Church.*

The following testimonies are extracted from such fathers as have flourished before the rise of the Pelagian heresy, which denied original sin, and which Unitarianism, in these and other particulars, revives. They exhibit, therefore, the undeniable evidences of the faith in the primitive ages of Christianity.

St. Justin Dialog. cum Tryph. post med. "We know that it was not, because Christ stood in need of baptism, or of the spirit which descended in the figure of a dove, that he came to the waters of the Jordan. Nor did he suffer himself to be born and crucified, because it was necessary for himself; but it

* "Eramus natura filii iræ, sicut et cæteri."

was for the human race, who, by Adam, had fallen into death, and the stratagem of the serpent, and who act wickedly by their own individual guilt."*

St. Irenæus, in his fifth book against heresies, 19th chapter, has these words: "He (Christ,) has destroyed the handwriting, our debts, hanging it upon the cross, in order that, as it was by the *wood*, we have been made debtors to God, by the wood likewise we may receive the remission of the debt."†

Tertullian, another learned father of the second century, expresses himself thus: "Every soul is reckoned to be in Adam, as long as it is not enrolled in Christ; as long unclean as it is not enrolled: and a sinner, because defiled."‡

St. Cyprian, the learned and eloquent Bishop of Carthage, and martyr, who illustrated the Church in the third century, writes thus, in his 59th Epistle to Fidus: "An infant newly born is guilty of no other sin, except that being born according to Adam, by way of natural generation, it has, from its very first birth, contracted the contagion of the ancient death."§

St. Hilary, in the fourth century, writes thus of David, in his explanation of the 118th Psalm: "He (David,) knows that he was born under the origin of sin, and under the law of sin."‖

St. Ambrose, in his Apology of David, or writing on the 50th Psalm, is not less explicit: "Before we are born," says

* Και ουχ ως ενδεα αυτον τυ βαπτισθηναι, η τυ εισελθοντος εν ειδει περιστερας πνευματος, οιδαμεν αυτον ελευθεναι επι τον ποταμον ωσπερ ουδε το γεννηθηναι αυτον η σταυρωθηναι, ως ενδεης τουτων, υπεμεινεν, αλλ' υπερ τυ γενους τυ των ανθρωπων, απο τυ Αδαμ υπο θανατον και πλανην της υφεως εισεπτωκει παρα την ιδιαν αιτιαν εκαστυ αυτων πονηρευσαμενυ.

† "Delevit, chirographum debita nostra, affigens illud cruci, ut quemad modum per lignum facti sumus debitores Deo, per lignum accipiamus debiti remissionem."

‡ "Omnis anima eousque in Adam censetur, donnec in Christo recenseatur: tamdiu immunda, quamdiu recenseatur: peccatrix autem, quia immunda."

§ "Infans recens natus nihil peccavit, nisi quod secundum Adam carnaliter natus, contagionem mortis antiquæ prima nativitate contraxit."

‖ "Scit se sub peccati origine et sub peccati lege esse natum."

he, "we are already defiled by contagion, and before we receive the benefit of the light, we receive already the injury of our origin; we are conceived in iniquity."*

St. Gregory Nazianzen shall close the list of the holy fathers, with what he says in his third Oration on Peace: "I, the whole man, have fallen, and have been condemned by the disobedience of the first man, and by the artifice of the serpent."

Passages similar to these will be found in St. Athanasius's Sermon on the text, "*All things are given over to me;*" in St. Basil's Homily on Fast, and in his Exposition of the 32d Psalm; in St. Cyril, of Jerusalem, 11 Catech. in St. Siricius, 1 Epist. ad Himerium, 2d chapter; in St. Jerome's Comm. in cap. 6, Oseæ; in St. Chrysostom, Homily ad Neophytos, &c. &c. It is then with much reason, St. Augustin, the scourge of the Pelagians, has written, (lib. 3. de peccat. meritis et remiss. cap. 6.) "This, and nothing else, (on original sin,) since the church of Christ has been established, has been written by those that explained the divine Scriptures; this and nothing else have they received from their ancestors; this and nothing else have they left to their posterity."‡

SECTION IV.

LVI. If the fathers of the primitive ages are unanimous in attesting the uniform and constant doctrine of the Church on original sin, the same tenet is not less irrefragably attested by the decrees of holy Pontiffs, and of the Councils held in the four first ages, which were issued against the impugners of original sin. The Pelagian error was proscribed by St. Inno-

* "Antequam nascamur, maculamur contagio: et ante usuram lucis, originis ipsius excipimus injuriam, in iniquitate concipimur."

‡ "Non aliud, ex quo Christi Ecclesia constituta est, divinarum scripturarum tractatores scripserunt, non aliud a majoribus acceperunt, non aliud posteris tradiderunt."

centius l. in his Epistle to the Fathers of the Councils of Carthage and Milevis; by St. Zosimus, in his Epistle to the Bishops of the whole world a fragment of which is extant in St. Augustine's 190 Epistle to Optatus, cap. 6, num. 23; in St. Prosper. lib. contra collatorem, cap. 5 ad Nicetam Aquileensem; by St. Gregory the Great, lib. 7, Epist. 53, ad Secundinum.

The constant and universal belief of the primitive church with regard to original Sin, is likewise incontestably evinced by numbers of councils, in which the dogma of original Sin was confirmed, and the contrary error condemned: this was done in the Synod of Palestine, and in that of Diospolis, in which Pelagius at least outwardly abjured his errors; in the council of Carthage, composed of sixty-eight Bishops, in the year of our Lord 416: in that of Milevis, by sixty-one Bishops; in that of Constantinople, under Atticus; in that of Antioch, under Theodotus, Bishop of the same city; in the numerous council of Carthage, under Aurelius, consisting of two hundred and seventeen Bishops, A.D. 418; in the Oecumenic council of Ephesus, A. D. 431; in the sixth council of Toleto, Can. 1; in the second council of Orange, Can. 2. He that may feel an interest in seeing the very texts and formal decisions of the said councils, is referred to the second dissertation of John Garner, on the councils held in the cause of the Pelagians, during the lifetime of St. Augustine: he may, in like manner, satisfy his curiosity, by consulting the collection of the councils, by F. F. Harduin, or Labbe.

SECTION V.

LVII. *The doctrine of Original Sin proved by the universality of the death of Christ for all men.*

Christ is the Redeemer and Saviour of all men, also of children. This proposition is clearly deduced from the 1st Epistle to Timothy, chap. 2.—"Who (Christ) gave himself a

redemption for all."* Epist. ad Rom. 8.—"He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us *all*."† 1st Epistle to Timothy, 4.—"Who is the Saviour of *all men*."‡ And, in fine, from the 1st Epistle of St. John, 2.—"And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."‖ Therefore all, and children also, are dead; all, therefore, are defiled by sin, as sin only can bring on the death of the soul; but children are not, cannot be contaminated with personal sin; therefore with original sin. Hence, St. Augustine rightly says, (lib. i. de peccat: merit et remiss.—cap. 23.) "Who shall dare to say, that Christ is neither the Saviour nor the Redeemer of infants? From what, then, does he save them, if the disorder of original sin be not in them? From what, then, does he redeem them, if by their origin from the first man, they have not been made slaves to sin."§

SECTION VI.

LVIII. *The dogma of original guilt is invincibly demonstrated, 1st, from the nature of Baptism—2ndly, from the necessity of Baptism—3rdly, from the ceremonies of Baptism.*

First. *Original Sin evinced from the nature of Baptism.* Baptism, by the divine institution of Christ, washes away, wipes off, cleanses from sin. In support of this truth, I might adduce the clearest evidence, both from scripture and perpetual tradition; but for brevity's sake, I shall confine myself to the common form of Baptism, which was used at the Baptism of infants, as well as of adults, and which was worded thus in the time of Pelagius, "*I baptize thee unto the remission of sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the*

* "Dedit semetipsum redemptionem pro omnibus."

† "Qui proprio filio suo non pepercit, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidit illum."

‡ "Qui est Salvator omnium hominum."

‖ "Ipse est propitiatio pro peccatis nostris, non pro nostris autem tantum, sed etiam pro totius mundi."

§ "Quis audeat dicere, non esse Christum infantium Salvatorem, nec Redemptorem? unde autem salvos facit, si nulla in eis est originalis ægritudo peccati? unde redimit, si non sunt per originem primi hominis venumdati sub peccato?"

Holy Ghost. Amen."* Whence I draw this argument:—from this formula it follows, that, when infants are baptized, they are delivered from sins, but they are not freed from actual sins, into which, for the want of the use of reason, they cannot fall; they, therefore, are freed from original sin, or else the church would tell a lie, when she baptizes infants *unto the remission of sins*, which is as impossible for her to do, in matters of faith and morals, as it is that the solemn promises made to her by Christ of his perpetual assistance, should fail. To preclude all Pelagian cavils against this proof, the celebrated council of Carthage, held in the year 418, made its second Canon, which is as follows: "It has pleased (the Council) that, whoever denies that the infants newly born ought to be baptized, or says, that they are, indeed, baptized unto the remission of sins, but that they do by no means draw from Adam original sin, which should stand in need of being effaced by the water of regeneration; from which it would follow, that, in regard to them, the form of Baptism *unto the remission of sins*, would not be true, but false, let him be anathema."†

Secondly. The existence of original sin is irrefragably inferred from the *necessity of Baptism.* All infants, as well as adults, stand in need of Baptism, in order to enter into the kingdom of Heaven, and to arrive at life everlasting; as manifestly appears from the words of Christ, in St. John, 3rd chap.—"Amen, Amen. I say to thee, unless a man be born again, of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."‡ That these words were always understood by the church to imply the absolute necessity of Bap-

* "Ego te Baptizo in remissionem peccatorum, in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen."

† "Placuit, ut, quicunque parvulos recentes ab uteris matrum Baptizandos negat, aut dicat, in remissionem quidem peccatorum eos baptizari, sed nihil ex Adam trahere originalis peccati, quod lavacro regenerationis expietur; unde fit consequens, ut in eis forma baptismatis *in remissionem peccatorum*, non vera, sed falsa intelligatur, anathema sit."

‡ "Amen, Amen, Dico tibi: nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto, non potest introire in Regnum Dei."

tism, undeniably appears from the very practice, which St. Augustine mentions, of both the parents, and the ministers of the church hastening with all possible speed, to the baptismal font, when children were in danger of death. Children, therefore, prior to their baptism, are subject to a sin, which excludes them from eternal life; but they are not subject to any personal sin, therefore, to original sin. That they must be subject to sin, cannot be denied, or else they could not be excluded from eternal life; for in the present state of things, no one is excluded from eternal life and the kingdom of God, but for sin alone; whose "wages, (as the apostle Paul speaks,) is the death" of both body and soul. As, therefore, infants dying without baptism are excluded from the kingdom of God, we must necessarily infer that they are defiled by sin.

Thirdly. The very ceremonies of Baptism necessarily suppose original sin in those that are baptized. The universal church of God, made use, since the very age of the Apostles, of exorcisms and of the ceremony of expelling the devil by breathing [exsufflationes,] at the baptism of adults and infants; by which, the unclean spirit is driven out from those that are baptized; as St. Cœlestine, in Epist. i. ad Episcopos Galliarum, cap. 12—St. Augustine, lib. 6, Contra Julian, cap. 2, et lib. 2, de peccato orig. cap. 40, teach. The church, therefore, believed that children, before their baptism, are stained by sin, and placed under the power of the devil; for we are not made the slaves of devils, but by sin. Hence, St. Augustine, lib. 2, operis imperf. numb. 171, writes thus:—"Wherefore, children too, when they are baptized, are rescued from the power of darkness, or else, as we have already said, and as it must often be repeated, the image of God cannot, without a signal insult to God, be exorcised and expelled, since it is the prince of the world who is there exorcised and driven out, in order that the presence of the Holy Ghost may take its place."* Therefore, according to the perpetual and

* "Propter hoc et infantes cum baptizantur, eruuntur de potestate tenebrarum; alioquin cum magna injuria Dei, sicut jam diximus et sape dicendum est, exorcizatur et exsufflatur imago Dei, si non ibi ille exorcizatur et exsufflatur princeps mundi, qui mittitur foras, ut sit illic habitatio Spiritus Sancti."

constant belief of the universal church, children are born, infected with original sin. There consequently exists Original Sin.

SECTION VII.

LIX. *Unitarian objections answered.*

After having, as we imagine, solidly established the dogma of original Sin, and entrenched it with impregnable bulwarks, it is now time to reconnoitre the position of our polemical foes, and to see by what engines they mean to break through and overturn our batteries.

First Objection. "We look with suspicion, (say the Unitarians,) * on the decisions of councils, synods, and church dignitaries, because all men are subject to error and prejudice; and the history of eighteen centuries has abundantly taught us that few have been less free from these imperfections than the rulers of the church."

Answer. This is, indeed, a commodious way of evading difficulties, and of ensuring to oneself the palm of victory, whatever may be his cause, or with whatever strength it may be opposed. Should you ever be attached in a court of justice, be your case as desperate as it may, yet in order to come off victorious, you have nothing else to do but to imitate the Unitarians in their manner of proceeding, with regard to the important affair that is agitating between them and the rest of the christian world. We demonstratively prove, from the divine scriptures, the various dogmas which they deny: they admit the titles, *The Scriptures*,—"Unitarians believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain authentic records of the dispensations of God, and of his revelations to men."† But what then? They deny that we take them in their true sense. Thus the scriptures are the authentic records of the revelations of God to men; but, observe, only when taken in the Unitarian sense. Then next, Unitarian-like, acknowledge the authenticity of the title which is produced against you in the court, and which you cannot deny,

* The Unitarian Miscellany and Christian Monitor, No. 1, page 9.
† Ibidem, page 11.

but be sure to deny the meaning which the adverse party affixes to it.—If we again tell the Unitarians, that the whole christian world, the primitive fathers, and the councils of the church, for the space of eighteen hundred years,' have uniformly understood the scriptures in the sense in which we christians understand them, they calmly and *modestly* reply, that they "look with suspicion on the decisions of councils, and synods, and church dignitaries;" and that, of course, you are to understand that they conceive their own importance (although but a handful of men—although but of yesterday,) amply sufficient to outweigh the authority of all ages, and of all christendom. In the same manner, if you are told by your judges, that the titles produced against you, have uniformly been understood by other tribunals and other judges, in a meaning that is contrary to your cause, the way of ending the difficulty is, gravely to tell your judges, that you do not take them in that sense, and that you think *your* judgment is as good as that of *all* the courts in the world; or rather, to gain your cause at once, that it is vastly *better*.—If, in fine, we press the Unitarian, and clearly demonstrate, that reason itself, the reason of all former ages and christians, decides in our favour, they again, with their wonted reservedness, answer—And what is that to us? Have we not reason too? Why should we not deem ourselves wiser, and understand matters better than the universal church, during the lapse of numerous ages? Thus, if you happen to see all your former exceptions overruled by your judges, on the ground that reason itself declares in favour of your adversary, you may cut the matter short, by plainly telling the court, that their reason, indeed, and that of other men, may judge so, but not your's; and that you think your own reason is as sound, nay sounder, than that of all the courts or inhabitants in the country. And, if our Unitarian friend be correct in his mode of attack or defence against the christian dogmas, you must, believe me, be also right in your process against the adverse party, and must undoubtedly gain your cause. But if, on the contrary, you should be looked upon as a madman, (as you most deservedly

would,) by such a mode of defending your cause, in what light must the world view the Unitarian system, which pursues exactly the same line of conduct, in attacking the christian mysteries?

LX. After this short digression, let us endeavour philosophically to investigate the weight which we are to give to the above objection. Is it then enough, in order to invalidate a dogma of religion, to reject indiscriminately the accumulated authority of all preceding ages, of the holy fathers, and councils of the church, of the universal christian world? Is it enough, in order to enervate the most decisive scripture evidences in support of christian tenets—tenets sanctioned by the constant practice and belief of all the faithful all over the globe, barefacedly to declare that they do not understand the scriptures like the rest of the world; and that, of course, their own reason, as contradistinguished from the reason of all other men, either of former ages, or of the present, must be considered as the only ultimate standard by which the world is to determine what is right, and what is wrong; what is to be admitted or rejected, in matters of religion? This grand trial pending between the christian world and the Unitarians, is of the deepest importance; for the fate of both parties must needs depend on its final issue. If the Unitarian mode of proceeding against the christian truths, be sanctioned by reason, then adieu to christianity; if, on the contrary, reason and plain good sense give in their verdict against the Unitarian system, then Unitarianism is undone. Whilst, therefore, we are discussing the merits of both parties, let mankind be the judge; let good sense, severe criticism, and inflexible justice preside over the momentous decision.

Suppose, therefore, you have a most important suit with a few individuals, who, on a sudden, begin to call in question some of your rights, or who, for example, dispute your claim to the tenure of a certain tract of land; the primary object of the court will be to examine the titles of both parties; then, to examine the witnesses, for and against; afterwards, to listen to the reasons alleged on either side; and lastly, to give their decision. Let us next suppose, that the case stands thus—

ASSAILANT.

1. The assailant maintains, that numerous errors have been committed in former times; and that, immemorial possession of property, can be of no service to the defendant.

2. The assailant cannot, and does not deny the authenticity of the titles of the defendant, but he reserves to himself the privilege of making them speak, contrary to the highest authorities and the rules of sound criticism, whatever he pleases, as we shall have frequent occasion to observe.

3. The assailant pretends that no regard whatever ought to be paid to the evidence of witnesses, how numerous and respectable soever they may be; that he is by no means disposed to be governed by other men, in determining the meaning of an instrument; and that his own meaning ought to be adopted, in preference to any other.

4. As to the public records, and decisions of divers courts, "he looks upon them with suspicion, as having been made by men, subject to error and prejudice."

DEFENDANT.

1. The defendant proves to the fullest satisfaction of the court, that he has had a peaceable and undisturbed possession from time immemorial, of the said property in question

2. The defendant produces his clear and indisputable titles to the same property; titles acknowledged authentic by the very confession of the adverse party.

3. The defendant produces a great number of the most reputable witnesses, who, both by word of mouth and in writing, unanimously testify, that his titles were at all times understood in the sense and meaning which he gives to them.

4. The defendant substantiates the fixed and invariable meaning of his titles, by public records; by the public, and solemn decisions of several tribunals of judicature; in fine, by the united testimony of the country at large, there being found not one dissenting voice.

Now the case being thus stated, it will not be difficult to anticipate the decision of the court; and, methinks, I see the judges scarce able to contain their indignation at the unblushing impudence of the assailant.—What, sir, (so they would deservedly address him,) are you in your senses? Can you dare pretend that immemorial possession, the deposition of witnesses, the solemn acts of public tribunals, are to be no longer noticed; and that all differences and causes arising amongst men, are no longer to be determined by prescription, by the authority of witnesses, or public acts of the established authorities, but by the private meaning, which the litigating party is pleased to affix to the law? If immemorial possession be no longer a title to the possessor, how few will remain unmolested, in the possession of their estates; how uncertain will the possession of most property become. If the evidence of witnesses is to be disregarded, how, sir, shall private and public affairs be settled? How shall justice be administered, innocence protected, or crime punished? If suits are to be decided, not by the laws, interpreted by judges appointed for that purpose, but by the private interpretation of the parties, what suit will ever come to an end, since each party will make the law speak, willingly or unwillingly, in such a manner as to favour his pretensions? You lay claim to the property of the defendant, but every thing speaks against you; and, on the contrary, every thing declares in favour of the defendant himself; his immemorial possession, his authentic titles, the number and respectability of his witnesses, public records, and the decisions of courts: depart, therefore, from this court, sir, and beware of troubling us, henceforward, with such unreasonable pretensions.

Such would be the decision of any well-regulated court of justice, in the case alluded to; such, therefore, must likewise be the sentence which good sense and sound logic will pronounce, in the trial which is brought by our Unitarian assailants, against the christian defendants: for the two cases are perfectly parallel; and, if there be any shade of difference

between them, it is altogether in favour of the latter, as will be seen by the following sketch.

LXI. *Sketch of the respective grounds on which both Christians and Unitarians rest their cause, and on their respective mode of pleading it.*

First. The christians demonstrate, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that those fundamental dogmas, which are denied by the Unitarians, such as the existence of Original Guilt; of the Trinity; of the Divinity of Christ; of the Mystery of the Redemption; of the Necessity of Supernatural Grace: were constantly, uniformly, and universally believed, all over the christian world, since the time of the apostles down to us, for the space of eighteen hundred years; that, of course, they have been in the quiet and undisturbed possession of said doctrines for eighteen centuries.

They corroborate this their assertion, *First*, by the most authentic monuments of the remotest antiquity.

Secondly, From the very constant and uninterrupted practice and worship of the universal church, from the very era of christianity to this day; the above doctrines not being merely speculative tenets, but practical mysteries, interwoven with the very nature of their divine institute, with the use of their sacraments, with their discipline, ceremonies, and divine worship.

Thirdly, They reason thus:—If the above doctrines did not emanate from Jesus Christ himself, and if they had not been taught by the apostles, then they must have been introduced after the apostolic age; and if so, it will then be in the power of the Unitarians to point out, first, who it was that ushered these dogmas into the world; secondly, in what age they were first forged and palmed upon mankind; thirdly, in what country the innovation began; by what Pontiff, or in what council they were first promulgated; who they were that opposed the daring innovator, and who they were that adhered to him: for ecclesiastical history bears witness, that

not even the smallest innovation ever took place in the church, but the said circumstances can be clearly pointed out. If, then, the above doctrines had, at any period posterior to that of the apostles, been broached, it would be an easy task for the Unitarians to fix with precision on their origin, the name of their author, the place of his birth, the number of his adherents, and of those that impugned the impostor. But christians, without the least fear of contradiction, defy the Unitarians to show the least vestige of such an innovation, with regard to the said mysteries; or to point out any of the circumstances just alluded to; therefore, they maintain themselves with reason in the enjoyment of the full possession of the said dogmas, against any invaders, who, after an eighteen hundred years' prescription, rise up, without any title or right whatever in hand, to dispute the sacred inheritance.

Christians go further, and triumphantly assert, that, had the above dogmas not been revealed by the God of truth, and handed down by the very founders of christianity, it would never have been in the power of any man, or of any number of men, to palm them, at any given posterior period, upon the whole christian world, and to cause them to be believed so constantly, so uniformly, so universally. For, even, aside from the solemn promises of perpetual assistance, made by Christ to his church,* such is the nature of men, such their pride and love of independence, such, in fine, their natural abhorrence of all kind of restraint, either mental or corporeal, that it would have been morally impossible for any impostor, or any number of impostors, tamely, and without an obstinate

* "Thou art *Peter*, (the Rock,) and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her."—Math. xvi. 18. "Behold! I am with you all days, even to the consummation of time."—St. Mat. xviii. "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me."—Luke x. 16. "The holy Ghost, the comforter, will teach you all truth, and lead you into all truth, and will abide with you for ever."—John xvi. 13. "The church of God is the pillar and foundation of truth."—1st Tim. iii. 13; from all which scriptural evidences, it is clearer than noonday that the church of Christ can as little err, as Christ, the only begotten Son of God can be wanting to his sacred word.

resistance, to captivate the minds of the christian world, into the firm belief of dogmas, of which, on the Unitarian supposition, they had never heard before, and which, by their unintelligibility, were so repugnant to the pride of human reason. An attempt of this nature would have thrown the christian world into combustion, and would have met with universal opposition; as was actually the case, when, as early as the third century, the Divinity of Christ was impugned by Arius, and Original Sin, together with the Necessity of Grace, in the fourth century, by Pelagius; when the whole christian world rose up with indignation against these profane novelties. Let Unitarians show that the supposed posterior introduction of the said doctrines, excited any thing like disturbances of that nature; but, there is not even a shadow of such troubles discoverable in the annals of the church; therefore, the said doctrines, being traced up through an uninterrupted possession to the very Apostolic ages, were not posteriorly introduced, but were received from the very mouth of Jesus Christ; and, of course, they are divine. Indeed, the public will readily grant, that, if lawful prescription has at all times, and is now considered in all the courts of the world, as the best title to the possessor, there was never produced, in any human tribunal, a prescription as immemorial, as universal, and as illustrious as that, which christians produce against Unitarians, in vindication of their divine doctrines.

LXII. The Christians next exhibit their titles, (the scriptures,) which are so authentic, so indisputable, and in fine, so venerable, that their very adversaries, the Unitarians, are forced to admit them as incontrovertible. And the grand question here arises, how these titles are to be understood. The Unitarians maintain that these titles ought to be taken in their sense; and that thus interpreted, they do not contain the doctrines for which christians contend. Christians, on the other hand, make it clearly appear, that they cannot, agreeably to reason and good sense, be distorted to any meaning different from that in which the whole christian world has hitherto understood them. They prove their assertion,

First. By the irrefragable argument of prescription, after this manner: When, a few years ago, the Unitarians set up their new system, by which they deny the fundamental doctrines of christianity, they found the whole christian world in the possession and uniform belief of the said doctrines. If, from our time, we gradually remount from age to age, till we arrive at the very establishment of the church, we find, in every age, exactly the same uniform belief; therefore, we conclude that, that constant, that uniform, that universal belief was derived from the Apostles; therefore, it contains the true and genuine meaning of the scriptures, respecting the said doctrines; therefore, the doctrine of the Unitarians, a doctrine not yet as old as I myself am, and diametrically opposite to that constant and uniform belief of all christendom, cannot be conformable to the Scriptures.

This reasoning is in perfect unison with the celebrated rule of St. Augustine—a rule founded on the common sense of mankind: "That, which the whole church holds or practises, and which has not been instituted or introduced, either by some Pontiff or council, must be considered as descending from Apostolical tradition:"* which perfectly coincides with this other maxim of Vincent of Lerins,† "What has been believed in every place, in every age, and by all, is incontrovertibly catholic doctrine." And, indeed, reason dictates, that a doctrine which is common to all christian nations, which embraces all times and all countries, must have had a common origin; and that it cannot be traced, but to the founders of christianity itself, the Apostles of Jesus Christ. For, as this doctrine is coeval with the christian era, it cannot have had an author posterior to the Apostolic age; and, as it is universal all over the christian world, it must have had an universal source, viz. the preaching of the Apostles, all over the

* "Quod universa tenet ecclesia, nec conciliis institutum, sed semper retentum est, non nisi auctoritate Apostolica traditum rectissime creditur." St. Aug. de Bapt. cont. donat. lib. 4, cap. 24.

† "Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est, hoc est vere proprieque Catholicum." St. Vincent. Lyrin. Commonit.

globe. Hence, it evidently follows, that the present uniform belief of all christians, touching Original Sin, the mysteries of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the Redemption of mankind, comes down to us in a lineal descent from the Apostles, and through them from Christ himself. This being a decisive point in the famous controversy, in which the church of God is engaged with our Unitarian friends, I beg leave to set this argument in a still clearer point of view.

Christ charged his Apostles with this solemn commission: "Go ye into the whole world, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Math. xxviii. They had been instructed by their divine Master in all the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the church,* and of the scriptures, whilst with him during his mortal life; and, after his resurrection, he gave them a full knowledge of what they did not understand of his divine discourses; for St. Luke informs us, "that he opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures"—St. Luke, xxiv. 45. On the other hand, the Apostles faithfully discharged the high trust committed to them: they, therefore, instructed their hearers, that is to say, the christians of the first age of the church, in the true meaning which Christ our Lord had attached to his own words. They did so, especially, with regard to the fundamental points of his gospel; such as the mysteries of the Trinity, and the Divinity of Christ. The Apostles, therefore, clearly explained to their primitive converts, whether their divine Master understood by these words, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," three distinct subsisting persons in God; and whether, of course, they were to be worshipped as true God or not: whether Jesus Christ was no more than a mere creature, or whether he was true God and true man, and so on. Had the Apostles not done this, they would manifestly have been deficient in the discharge of their divine commission; they would have exposed their own and all future

* "Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given." Matt. xiii. 7.

generations to the danger of going astray about the very object of their worship; to the danger of a monstrous idolatry, in adoring three persons in God, instead of one; or a mere man, in Jesus Christ, instead of a God. The Apostles, of course, explained to the primitive christians the true meaning of those passages; which the christians of the present and past ages, have invariably understood to imply, the mysteries of the Trinity, of the Divinity of Christ, of Original Sin, &c. &c.; and which our Unitarian friends labour so hard to force into the service of their new system. Now, let me ask, how did the Apostles explain the passages under consideration? What meaning did they affix to the oracles of their divine Master, and to their own writings? No other, unquestionably, than that which was delivered by the first generation of christianity, to the succeeding ages; and which, was thus uniformly and invariably handed down to the present time. Now, I ask again, what meaning of the scriptures, respecting the above doctrines, did the Apostolic age transmit to the succeeding generations? It can be no other than that, in which the christian world, at all times to this very day, has understood the said scriptures; no other than that which imports the dogma of Original Sin, the mysteries of the Trinity, of the Divinity of Christ, &c. The inference, therefore, is inevitable: christians have the true meaning of the scriptures, in this respect; because they have the meaning given by the Apostles. This sense of the scriptures, thus determined and delivered by the college of the Apostles to the church formed by them, is infallibly correct—is a revealed truth: not only because the Apostles, as all must grant, could not err in the interpretation of the scriptures, but also because, whilst they were explaining and delivering the true sense of the sacred writings, the Lord confirmed their preaching by wonders and prodigies, and thus stamped upon it the seal of his divine veracity and approbation. The doctrines, therefore, of the Trinity, Divinity of Christ, &c. uniformly believed and maintained to this present day, by all christendom, are divine doctrines—doctrines delivered by infallible interpreters, and

sanctioned as such by Heaven. Whence, it further follows, that, as two opposite doctrines or meanings cannot be both true, the Unitarian meaning or doctrine, diametrically opposite to the meaning given by the Apostles, cannot be true, and that Unitarians explain the scriptures, in this regard, in a sense directly opposite to that in which the Apostles explained it. From the unanswerable force of this argument, christians have a well-established right to reject the Unitarian explanation of the scriptures, even without examining or refuting it in detail, as an illegitimate and profane novelty, for this plain reason, that it contradicts the interpretation of the Apostles. And, indeed, may not the christians of our age, address our Unitarian friends in the same dignified language, in which the true believers of the second century addressed the innovators of their time?—"Who are you? when and whence did you come? what are you, strangers, doing on my property? by what right, Marcion, do you cut down my woods? by what right, Valentin, do you disturb my fountains? by what privilege do you remove my boundaries, Apelles? The possession is mine—why do you sow here and pasture at your pleasure? The possession is mine—I am the old possessor, I am the first possessor, I have the sources, uncorrupted, from the persons themselves from whom the estate was originally derived; I am the heir of the Apostles; according to the provisions of their will, according to their charge of its execution, according to the solemnity of their oath, I claim the right of my inheritance."* In a word, our Unitarian friends come eighteen hundred years too late to teach us the true meaning of the scriptures; this meaning has been given by the very founders of the church of God, and sanctioned by Heaven; for of them

* "Tertull. lib. præser. cap. 37. "Qui estis? quando et unde venistis? quid in meo agitis non mei? Quo denique, Marcion, jure sylvam meam cœdis? qua licentia, Valentine, fontes meos transvertis? qua potestate, Apelles, limites meos commoves? Mea est possessio: quid hic cœteri ad voluntatem vestram seminatis et pascitis? Mea est possessio: olim possideo, prior possideo, habeo origines firmas, ab ipsis auctoribus quorum fuit res. Ego sum hæres Apostolorum. Sicut caverunt testamento suo, sicut fidei commisserunt, sicut adjuraverunt, ita teneo."

we read, "But they going forth, preached every where, the Lord co-operating with them, and confirming the word with signs that followed.—St. Marc, ult°. verse ult°.

The meaning given by the disciples of Christ to the scripture passages relative to our controverted doctrines, is in direct contradiction to the Unitarian doctrines. That this is actually the case, is a public, solemn, and interesting fact, a fact which is substantiated by the present universal belief of all Christian churches all over the globe, however divided they may be in other doctrinal points among themselves; next, by the concurrent testimony of all preceding ages down to Christ; by the writings of the first apologists of Christianity; by the unanimous evidence of the primitive fathers of the church; by the solemn decisions made in eighteen Œcumenic Synods, held for the space of eighteen centuries; by even the universal practice, ceremonies, and public worship of the church. A fact of this description is indisputably true, or else there is no truth at all in the annals of history. An attempt, therefore, to overturn this fact by a bold tone of assurance, by vague declamation, by metaphysical quibbles, by suppressing, transposing, or substituting one preposition or pronoun for another in the same text, contrary to all the editions extant, by changing the adjective to the substantive, by altering the punctuation at pleasure, by cruelly torturing the text till it submit to speak whatever our Unitarian friends wish it to declare; in fine, by unmercifully cutting off from the body of the scriptures, or rendering doubtful such passages as are too hard a bone even for the free and independent interpretation of our opponents, such an attempt, I say, is a desperate measure, which sound criticism may smile at or scorn, but from which it has nothing to fear.

LXIII. *Secondly.* Next Christians support their assertion by witnesses. But what witnesses? Witnesses the most unexceptionable, the most respectable, and the most respected, in all ages, and in all countries; witnesses of the highest moral probity, of known integrity, of unparalleled wisdom, and moreover the best qualified to give evidence on

the meaning of the sacred scriptures: for who are those witnesses? They are, in the first place, *the first age of the Church*, consisting chiefly of Christians who were saints, and, for the greater part, martyrs. These Christians received the sacred volumes immediately from the very hands of the Apostles, together with the true and genuine meaning of them. They lived with them, conversed with them, listened to their preachings, in which they more diffusely explained, what they had consigned to their writings; in short, they had every opportunity afforded them to be informed by the Apostles of the true and genuine sense of the sacred scriptures. This first age, thus instructed and formed in the very school of the Apostles, faithfully delivered to the succeeding generation the faith of the above doctrines, once delivered to them, and so from age to age down to this present day.

LXIV. *Thirdly.* The second class of witnesses produced by Christians in vindication of their contested doctrines, consists of the most illustrious characters that ever adorned the church of God, I mean the Holy Fathers who either lived in or closely followed the age of the Apostles, down to the fourth century, both in the Greek and Latin church. This long succession of apostolical men, the greater part of whom sealed their faith with their blood, and all of whom have not less illustrated the church of God by the lustre of their sanctity, than by the admirable productions of their genius, all, with one voice, depose in favour of the Christian dogmas against the Unitarians.

LXV. *Fourthly and lastly.* They have in their behalf the solemn judgments, and public decisions, which have been rendered in synods and councils, held at different times, and in various countries, and by which the Christian faith has been solemnly confirmed. They add to this the perfect agreement of the present Greek church with the Latin church, with regard to the doctrines under consideration, which perfect concordance must assuredly be considered of decisive importance, when we reflect, that the Greek schismatical church, having been now divided upwards of eight or nine hundred

years, cannot be supposed to have borrowed her faith from the rest of the Christian world, on whom she looks with a jealous eye, as her rivals. The Greeks, then, have received the above doctrines from their ancestors.

LVI. But what do the Unitarians offer, in reply to all this? Any thing like argument? By no means; for that is impossible. Why, such answers as would be rejected with feelings of contempt, mingled with indignation, in any court of justice. They tacitly reply: We cannot, indeed, deny, but the Christians have the immemorial possession of the above doctrines, in their favour, and that such was the uniform and constant belief of all Christendom, through all past ages, at least from the third century;* but the whole Christian world, and all past ages, were in error; we only are right; we are wiser than the whole world, and all preceding generations; we understand matters better, although but a few men,† although but the offspring of yesterday, although

*If our Unitarian friends should happen to deny that such was the constant and uniform belief of all former ages, let them turn their attention to the irresistible arguments, by which this public and solemn fact is substantiated, in this and the following numbers. But from a slight acquaintance with the Unitarian writings every one may satisfy himself, that our opponents, in general, are very little concerned about the belief of past ages, and that all they oppose to the weight of authority, is that they are not to be ruled by the creeds of others, but by their own reason. The answer, therefore, which we have placed here in the mouth of our opponents, is correct, and in perfect conformity with their general principles and professions.

†Although Unitarians in general do not seem to pay much regard to number and authority, still, from the anxiety which they manifest in their writings, of exaggerating the number of their followers, it is clearly perceivable that they would consider it no small recommendation for their system, to count a great number of votaries. Hence the frequent mention made of their Congregations, Bible Societies, Colleges, and other public institutions. But notwithstanding all this, they will not, I trust, consider me disrespectful or incorrect, when I maintain, that, in every respect, they are still but few: few, if contrasted with the whole Christian world; few, if compared even with other religious Societies severally taken: few, if viewed in regard to the number of those that seem to profess their principles; for as there exists so close an alliance between the process of the Unitarians and the Deists in the investigation of religion, and as unrestrained reason, their only guide, leads them nearly to the same result or creed, which consists in admitting but one single dogma, which is even known

at a distance of eighteen hundred years, we understand matters better than those primitive Christians who lived so near

by the light of reason alone, viz. the unity and supremacy of one only God, it will not be easy, even for the Unitarians themselves, to discern with accuracy to what class numbers of those belong that frequent their assemblies, whether to that of the Unitarians, or to that of the Deists. True it is, that the Unitarian professes to revere revelation, and to receive the sacred Scriptures, and the Deist does not: but allow once the Deists, as the Unitarians do, to reason away all the mysteries of revelation, and they will, believe me, make very little difficulty to believe all the rest, and even to show some respect for the moral precepts of the Gospel, a circumstance which we read to have been observed by the Pagans themselves. Indeed, when we hear Unitarian preachers break out in loud censure upon the courts of justice for their endeavouring to stop the circulation of Deistical works; when we are told "to listen to the Deist's arguments, when he argues against the holiest doctrines of faith, and *if they be valid*, to allow their force;" when, in fine, we see sermons eulogized, in which sentiments like these are boldly expressed, we can scarce refrain from suspecting that there exists a more than ordinary friendship between the Unitarians and the Deists. *See a Sermon preached at the Unitarian Chapel, on the Duties of Christians towards Deists, by W. T. Fox, in the Christian Disciple, 3d number, vol. 3, page 202.*

But suppose the number of Unitarians as large, or even much greater, than they would fain make it appear, would this be a test of the truth of their system? If so, then Deism will have strong claims to truth, for it is a fact, that in this pretended age of reason, the number of Infidels far exceeds that of our Unitarian friends. Number, indeed, is a test of truth, when that number is composed of enlightened and sanctified characters, when the doctrines professed are as humiliating to the pride of reason as they are repugnant to all the darling inclinations of man, and when the professors of those doctrines are at all times ready to seal them with their blood. Such was the multitude of the faithful, who, during the three first ages of the church, bled and died for the Christian law, a law incomprehensible in its mysteries, and most severe upon flesh and blood in its morality. But when a religion is held out which proclaims the reason of man to be independent, which tells man that he has an inalienable right to think and to act for himself as he pleases, and which at once frees him from all restraint, from painful duties, from humiliating exercises, and leaves him complete master of his faith, both as to the theory and practice; such a religion is too congenial to all the passions and feelings of corrupt nature, not to be cordially received by numbers, who will naturally prefer a plain and easy road to heaven, to a strait and rugged one. Such, we all know, was the baneful effect of Mahometanism, a religion of flesh and blood, upon the effeminate inhabitants of the East. Number, in such cases, proves nothing in favour of the system, but only becomes an additional proof of the depravity of human nature.

the apostolic age. They were all wrong; for us only it was reserved to discover the truth: our single individual reason sees better than the general and collective reason of all former ages. As to the Fathers of the Church, both Greek and Latin, whose testimonies you cite against us, we reject them all in a lump, as "men subject to error and prejudice." Let the world revere them, as it always did, for their sanctified character, let it extol and admire their genius: those great men were involved in darkness with the rest of the world. We are the only true illuminati; and our authority we conceive to be greater than that of the whole Christian world through eighteen centuries!!! All this is, and must be, at least virtually, implied, in the answers which they return to the arguments which fall upon them with the overwhelming weight of the whole Christian world, and all past generations. Surely I need not advert any further to the inconsistency of such a reply, on which, I am confident, every reader has already passed his judgment.

LXVII. However, before I dismiss this matter, I cannot refrain from making a supposition, which will make my reader touch, as it were, with his hand, the folly of the Unitarian pretensions. Suppose, therefore, that, at some very remote period, say eighteen hundred years hence, a handful of men should rise all on a sudden in these United States, and gravely tell the American nation: Hitherto you have been totally mistaken in the true meaning of the American Constitution; all past generations understood nothing at all of it; it must be taken in a sense quite opposite to that, in which our forefathers hitherto took it. Pray, in what light would the then existing American generation look upon this new and strange kind of political demagogues? How would they treat this unheard of parodox? Why, their plain good sense would make them reply with one voice: What! gentlemen, you mean assuredly to insult both our reason and our feelings. No one hitherto understood the American Constitution! No, not the very generation which was coeval with the very first establishment of our Federal Government, nor the Americans that

lived and conversed with the very framers of the Constitution, nor all the national councils which were annually held for these eighteen centuries past, and who, in their deliberations, in their debates, and in the exercise of their legislative power, were eternally guided by the Constitution as by their polar star; nor all the tribunals of judicature throughout the Union, whose solemn decisions were constantly based on the Constitution; nor all the learned men that have preserved in their works the precise and determinate meaning of it given by the very framers of it; nor, in fine, all the American States, which have constantly understood them exactly as we do at this very day!! No; no man, to this present age, understood them rightly; the American Constitution signifies the reverse of what was hitherto believed: we, after the lapse of eighteen hundred years, come to inform you, that we are the first, and the only men, that have unravelled its true meaning, the meaning intended by those who framed it!! What would be the surprise of any future generation if such language were to be held out to them? and what then ought to be our feelings, when we behold a small number of men, in the eighteen hundredth year after the Christian æra, gravely tell the world, that hitherto they did not understand the Scriptures relative to the dogmas in question, and that they are the first and only ones, that have discovered their right sense? Never were there two cases more parallel than that which I have just now supposed, and that of the Unitarians against Christians at large. The mode of reasoning and proceeding is identically the same on both sides; whether equally absurd or equally correct, let the reader determine.

Nothing could have induced the author of these sheets to give a more than ordinary length to the above digression, but its great importance towards the complete vindication, not only of the dogma of original guilt, but also of the Trinity, Divinity of Christ, and all other doctrines which are at issue between Christians and Unitarians. For once for all, let it be remembered, that the same ancient possession and prescription of eighteen hundred years, the same divine and au-

thentic titles, the Scriptures, the same mass of evidence, the same solemn judgments and universal practices of the church, which we have produced in support of original sin, are equally applicable to every other doctrine which Christians contend for. Had we nothing else to offer in vindication of the ancient faith against modern philosophy, this argument alone would be sufficient to decide the question; for we are confident, that there is no court of justice in the world, in which a cause, supported with such irresistible arguments as the above are, would not carry off the palm of victory.

SECTION VI.

SECOND OBJECTION FROM REASON.

LXVIII. *Can man sin before he exist? Could the infant, that is born six thousand years after Adam, consent or dissent to his prevarication? How could a just God impute a sin to those who had no share in it?*

ANSWER.

1. To these, and other like difficulties, I shall here premise a general answer, which is this: It is a maxim received by all true philosophers and divines, and grounded on the very essence of things, that when a fact or proposition is demonstratively proved to be self-evident, it cannot possibly be false; from that moment, whatever difficulties may be alleged against the said fact or proposition, and how unanswerable soever they may seem, the said fact or proposition ought to be considered as most certain and incontrovertible, and the objections urged against it as empty sophisms, void of weight and conclusiveness. Thus, as the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, rest upon intrinsic and most evident demonstrations, the few objections of some libertines against them, although you were gratuitously to suppose them irrefragable, can, in no ways, affect the absolute certitude of those fundamental truths. This maxim is founded on this first principle of all sciences: *the same thing, considered in the*

same point of view, cannot at once be and not be, cannot be true and false at the same time. As, therefore, original guilt is proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, (as are likewise the other Christian doctrines,) the objections advanced against it cannot be of any weight whatever.

But lest this general observation should induce our opponents to conclude that their arguments are unanswerable, we shall immediately proceed to their examination.

First, we are asked: Can a man sin before he exists? Could an infant, that is born six thousand years after Adam, possibly consent to, or dissent from, his prevarication?

LXIX. *Answer.* These, and the like objections, copied from the anti-christian sophisters, and founded on a pitiful equivocation on the word *sin*, confound actual and original sin with each other: and setting out with these confused notions, the disputes against religion are interminable.

"Can a man sin before he exists?" No, assuredly he cannot sin *actually*, by his *own actual and physical will*, before he actually and physically exists. But it is not thus man sinned in Adam: Adam alone *personally* committed original sin, by his own free physical will; or rather, what we call original sin, was in Adam an *actual* and personal sin, but not so in his posterity, who are not guilty of the sin of Adam, but in as far as they are the unhappy children of a guilty parent, in whom they were all morally contained, as in the moral head, the parent and representative of all mankind. Adam was appointed by the Almighty, head and representative of all men, with regard to the observance of the commandment which he imposed on him: Adam, as such, prevaricates, by his own personal free will, in consequence of which he is disgraced for his own personal guilt, and with him, all his descendants, not for their own actual guilt, but because they are the children of a rebellious parent, in whose fall and disgrace, as being in a moral sense, one person with him, they are involved. Thus original sin, in the first man, is a true, personal, actual guilt, but as far as original sin relates to the unhappy children of Adam, it is by no means a personal and actual sin, but ra-

ther a moral and habitual guilt, transmitted by their first parent, their moral head; it is an *original* sin, because physically committed by Adam, the very origin and principal of the human race, and contracted by his descendants in deriving their origin from him; it is the sin of human nature, because committed by the will of him who was its parent and its principal. As actual sin renders the whole man a sinner, so the sin of Adam rendered all human nature sinful, in every one that belongs to it, insomuch that God, having established Adam the principal of the human race, and entrusted him, as such, with every thing for his own person and his posterity, by his prevarication the whole human race became in him, as it were, one culprit, after nearly the same manner as the decay of the root suffices to blast the whole plant. This sin, considered in the descendants of Adam, chiefly consists in the privation of the sanctifying grace, and, (in case this be not restored by baptism received either in fact or in desire,) in the exclusion from eternal life. It is thus original sin, when considered as existing in the children of Adam, is explained by the fathers of the church, and the most able theologians: "A newly born child, (says St. Cyprian,) has sinned no otherwise, except that being born according to Adam, after the flesh, it has contracted the contagion of ancient death in its first birth."*

LXX. *Objection.* But how can God, consistently with his justice, punish the children for the guilt of the parents, which they did not physically, but only morally, commit?

Answer. Nearly after the same manner, we see the same done every day among men, without any one censuring such a procedure. Does not human justice itself punish the children for the crimes of their parents? and are there not laws in almost every government, which degrade from the state of nobility, not only the criminal, but also all his posterity? These laws do not appear to men unjust. Or, would

* "Infans recens natus nihil peccavit, nisi quod secundum Adam carnaliter natus, contagionem mortis antiquæ prima nativitate contraxit." St. Cyprianus. Epist. 59 ad Fidum.

you deem it unjust in a sovereign to act after this or such like manner, with one of his subjects: "If you be loyal and faithful to me, and take my interest to heart, I shall raise you to the first degree of nobility, make you my prime minister, and bestow on you an extraordinary pension; my favours shall not die with you, but pass to your descendants from generation to generation. But, on the contrary, if, instead of being loyal to me, you turn out a traitor, or rebel against me, then not only you in person, but all your posterity, shall be for ever deprived of the above advantages." Now this is, after our manner of considering things, nearly the way in which God proceeded with Adam, our head and representative, and who, of course, in this respect, was morally all men: "If thou obey my voice, (such we conceive was the covenant which God made with Adam,) and abstain from the forbidden fruit, then not only thou shalt remain in the possession of sanctifying grace, of immortality, and be free from rebellious concupiscence, and the other miseries of life, but thou shalt transmit the same exalted privileges and munificent gifts to thy whole posterity: but if thou prevaricate, not only thou, but thy whole posterity, shall be stript of the same glorious endowments: for I have established thee their head and representative, and placed, as it were, their future fate in thy hands." Now, I ask, is there any thing blameable in this conduct?

LXXI. There is, replies the Unitarian, for how could God make my fate depend on the free will of another?

He could do it, nearly after the same manner as the sovereign, in the above example, causes the fate of the children to depend on the loyalty of their parents; and after the same manner as the law considers the will of the guardian, as the moral will of his pupil, insomuch that whatever the guardian does in his capacity of guardian, is deemed to be done by the pupil himself.

LXXII. But how does it comport with the justice of God, to strip, in punishment for the guilt of the sinful parent, all his children, who had but a moral share in it, of sanctifying grace, of immortality, and, unless reborn in Christ, of eternal life?

This agrees as perfectly with the justice of God, as it agrees with the mortal sovereign abovementioned, to deprive the children of a rebellious subject of those gratuitous favours, which he had designed for them, had he continued faithful and loyal to him. And why is there not even a shadow of injustice in this? The reason of it is obvious: because justice is then only violated, when you withhold from another that which is strictly due to him, and to which he has a strict claim. Now does the sovereign under consideration, by depriving the disloyal subject and his children of the promised favours, strip them of any thing that was strictly due to them, and to which they had an unalienable previous right? By no means: for it is manifest, that the said sovereign was in no wise bound to promise or bestow such extraordinary gifts upon his subject and his posterity, that he might have refused them, without the smallest violation of justice, even if his subject had always given him the strongest marks of his loyalty, because those favours are mere gratuitous gifts, they are privileges, and the free effects of royal benevolence, to which no one can lay a strict claim, with how much more reason then can he refuse them when the subject rebels against him? This example in some measure explains the case before us: for I ask, does God, by depriving men, in punishment of the crime of their first parent, of sanctifying grace, of the state of immortality, and the other appendages of original integrity, deprive them of any thing that is strictly due to them? No, the exalted prerogatives of original justice were so many gratuitous gifts and extraordinary privileges, which God no wise owed men, and which He might have refused, even if man had never sinned: so little were they due to him, so little was their requisition proportioned to the natural exigency of his nature. If God, then, without deviating from the dictates of his justice, might have refused these gifts to man when innocent, how much more so, to man when guilty? But that the prerogatives of the state of original innocence, were mere gratuitous gifts of the infinite liberality of the Creator, is the constant doctrine of all Christian philosophers and divines,

who unhesitatingly maintain that God might have created man, without elevating him to a supernatural state, and of course, without adorning him with sanctifying grace and other supernatural gifts; that moreover he might have created man mortal, and subject to the evils of this world: for man has nothing in his nature that can strictly entitle him to a supernatural destination, or to an exemption from those miseries which are the connatural appendages of his nature.

LXXIII. Granting, continues the Unitarian, that there is nothing in this mystery incompatible with the justice of God, still does not reason discover in it something irreconcilable with his bounty: how could a God, infinitely good, annex the destiny of all mankind to the free will of their first parent, when he foresaw that he would fall?

In order to vindicate the equity and the bountiful views of Divine Providence upon mankind, suppose, for a moment, all men had been actually present, when God was about to place their destiny in the hands of Adam, by appointing him to represent all mankind on this occasion, so that his will should be deemed, in a moral sense, the will of all men, and his fate morally the fate of all men. Now I ask, would we not all, had we been then in actual existence, have hailed such a design as most desirable and advantageous to us, and as most worthy of the infinite goodness of our Creator? Would we not, in case God had left the matter to our own free option, have accepted the proposed condition with feelings of the liveliest gratitude and admiration? For when we take it into consideration on the one side, how richly Adam was endowed by the liberal hand of God with the most extraordinary gifts both of nature and grace, and on the other the easy condition which God exacted, viz. his obedience to one single precept, and that a most easy one, there was not a shadow of probability, that Adam, on such a solemn occasion, on which he well knew the infinite importance of what was at stake, should not keep so easy a commandment. Thus, instead of blaspheming his infinite goodness, we have reason to admire the excess of his paternal love towards mankind, in annexing to so de-

sirable a condition the transmission of original justice; the more so, as the prerogatives of original integrity were by no means due to men, and that he might in justice have refused them, even if Adam had not prevaricated.

LXXIV. Men, indeed, replies the Unitarian, if actually existing then, would have had reason gladly to accept such a proposal on the part of God, because every thing would have led them to believe, that Adam would undoubtedly keep so easy a precept, and thus merit for them original justice; but how could God propose it, He who infallibly knew that Adam would not keep it, and thus render himself, with his posterity, unhappy?

God could propose this condition, although he had an infallible foreknowledge that Adam would not fulfil it, for the very same reasons for which he grants liberty or free will to men, although he foresees that men will abuse it. Does free will, thus bestowed upon them with the certain foresight of the future abuse thereof, cease to be a gift of God, does it cease to be a true benefit? It does not, and the reason of it is this: because God, notwithstanding the future abuse of the free will of men, bestows free will upon them, not to the end, that they should make an ill use of it, but with a most sincere desire, that they should make use of it for the advancement of his glory and their own salvation. God, indeed, has it in his power to prevent the abuse of free will, and, of course, sin, by depriving man of his liberty, but as on that supposition man would not be able to give any degree of glory to God, or to acquire any merit for himself, he deems it more consonant to his infinite wisdom and justice, (as St. Augustine observes,) not to prevent evils, than not to draw greater good from them.—Therefore, when he permits sin to be committed, it is always with a view of drawing greater good from it, viz. a greater manifestation of his infinite perfections, a thing which none but an infinite power and wisdom are able to do. What has been said here on sin at large, is perfectly applicable to original sin in particular. The prescience which God had of the fall of Adam, does by no means lessen the infinite kindness

of God towards men, in proposing so easy a condition to merit for us such extraordinary and gratuitous favours; because when God attached the fate of men to the accomplishment of so easy a condition, it was with a most serious and sincere intention, that Adam should keep the commandment, and thus bring on his posterity the same supernatural gifts, with which the liberal hand of God had so copiously and so gratuitously adorned him.

LXXV. But would not he have shown greater kindness to men, if he had hindered the downfall of Adam, and, of course, that train of evils, which, in consequence of it, rushed in upon his race?

It might appear so to men, who are in the habit of considering the fall of Adam in itself, and insulated from the admirable designs which God, in the secret counsels of his infinite wisdom and goodness, had conceived for the restoration of fallen man; but the Christian philosopher, who knows it to be a bad method of judging of the merit and beauty of a painting, to consider each part in itself, and as unconnected with the other parts or with the whole; the Christian philosopher views the memorable event of the fall of Adam, not insulated, but connected with the whole order and plan of the bounteous dispensations of Heaven, and thus embracing at once the *tout ensemble* of the admirable counsels of the Most High on fallen man, his mind is enlarged, astonished, enraptured, at the wonderful inventions of the eternal love of God towards man, he is lost in admiration, at the most perfect symmetry, harmony, and beauty, which reign through all the works of God and through all the plans of his all-wise and bountiful providence; in fine, thus contemplating the dispensations of Heaven in their totality and connection, he discovers at every step the strongest motives to admire the mercy of his God, in the very permission of that original fall, which has been heretofore the object of anti-christian sarcasm, and is now made an object of censure by the Unitarian.

Yes, I am bold to assert, that there is scarce a mystery in the Christian code, in which all the perfections of the Al-

mighty, and especially his infinite mercy and goodness, are displayed with more lustre than in the very permission of original sin. For why, and with what views, did God permit it? With views most worthy of his infinite wisdom and mercy; with a design of drawing from that sin infinitely more good, and of raising fallen man to a state of glory and bliss incomparably higher than that which he would have enjoyed in the condition of his original justice. No sooner was the prevarication committed, than God made known his gracious designs to fallen man by this memorable and solemn promise of a future Redeemer, "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel."* Thus God graciously designed from the beginning of the world, to send a Redeemer, "in the plenitude of time," for the redemption of mankind. But what species of redemption? a redemption which has astonished heaven and earth, and which will fill men and angels with rapturous admiration, for all eternity; a redemption the most glorious to God, the most plentiful, the most honourable, and the most advantageous to guilty man. For this gracious promise, after the lapse of four thousand years, was accomplished by the ineffable mystery of the incarnation, in which the *eternal word*, the only begotten Son of God, the second person of the adorable Trinity, was *made flesh*, and uniting to his divine nature, the very nature of fallen man in the unity of his divine person, was true God and true man, and as such paid to the divine justice, by the death of the cross, that rigorous and condign satisfaction and atonement for sin, which guilty man of himself was unable to pay. From that moment heaven is reconciled with the earth, hitherto accursed,† mercy and justice meet in the kiss

* "Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum et semen illius: ipsa conteret caput tuum, et tu insidiaberis calcaneo ejus." The Hebrew, *ipsum*, the seed, or as others read, *ipse*, the son of the woman, have exactly the same meaning.

† "And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his cross, both as to the things that are on earth, and the things that are in Heaven." Coloss. i. 25.

of peace,* the gates of heaven are expanded to all men: from that moment all the attributes of God blaze forth with an unparalleled splendour; his infinite mercy, in not abandoning sinful and ungrateful man in his forlorn condition, but in rescuing him from all his miseries, and in restoring him to his former rights,† his awful justice, in receiving by the bloody sacrifice of the cross, an infinite satisfaction, a satisfaction strictly commensurate to the injury offered to God by sin; his infinite love towards men, "in so loving the world as to give his only-begotten Son, that every one that believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting;" his infinite liberality, wisdom, and power, in contriving for the restoration of mankind, so ineffable a mystery as that of the incarnation,‡ in consequence of which one and the same person is capable of suffering as man, and of giving infinite dignity to his sufferings as God, and likewise in inventing such a mode of redemption, as should be at once the most painful and ignominious to the Redeemer, and the most lenient and most glorious to guilty and ungrateful men. From this moment God is honoured and adored after such a manner as would never have taken place in the state of original justice: for he is honoured and adored by a God-man; he receives infinite adorations in him that adores him as man, and who gives infinite dignity to his adorations as God. From this moment the nature of man is exalted to the very throne of the divinity, in the person of the incarnate word, and man being incorporated and united with the word made flesh, as a

* "Mercy and truth have met each other; justice and peace have kissed." Psalms, lxxxiv. 11.

† "He has received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy." St. Luke, i. 54. "But God, who is rich in mercy, through his exceeding charity with which he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together in Christ, (by whose grace you are saved.)" Ephes. i. 4, 5.

‡ "But when the goodness and kindness of *our Saviour God* appeared, not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and the renovation of the Holy Ghost." Titus, iii. 5. "He has showed might in his arm." St. Luke, i. 51.

member with the head,* and as the branch with the vine,† contracts an infinite dignity from that intimate alliance, and is made capable of honouring God as much as his infinite perfection deserves; his actions, even the most indifferent, when performed in union with Christ his head, are actions of infinite merit, and are entitled to a degree of glory and bliss, to which man in the state of innocence could never have been entitled, because they are not so much the actions of men, as the moral actions of Christ, their mystical head, being performed through the influence of his grace and of his spirit; being offered to God by him, and finally through him accepted.‡ Now all this would not have taken place in the state of original justice; God would have been far from obtaining the same degree of glory, and man from being elevated to the same degree of honour and of bliss. Have we not, therefore, great reason, with heart-felt gratitude to acknowledge and adore the depths of the infinite wisdom and knowledge of God in permitting a sin, which was to be the occasion of such immense benefit to mankind? At the sight of the admirable counsels of God for the redemption of mankind, the church cannot contain her inflamed sentiments, but giving way to the rapture of her transports, she breaks forth in the following sublime strain: "O wonderful condescension of thy mercy towards us! O inestimable love of charity! thou hast delivered up thy Son to redeem the servant! O, truly necessary sin of Adam, which was cancelled by the death of Christ! O, happy guilt, which was to have such and so great a Redeemer!"§

* "And he is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he may hold the primacy." Coloss. i. 18.

† "I am the vine; you the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit." John, xv. 5.

‡ "By whom (Christ) he hath given us very great and precious promises; that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature." 2 Cor. i. 4.

§ "O mira circa nos tuæ pietatis dignatio! O inestimabilis dilectio charitatis! ut servum redimeres, filium tradidisti. O certe necessarium Adæ peccatum, quod Christi morte deletum est! O felix culpa, quæ talem ac tantum meruit habere Redemptorem!" In Bened. cerei Pasch. Sabb. S.

Objection. But the Unitarian has not yet done: "This doctrine, (says he,) makes God the author of sin, and the punisher of crimes in men, which he has rendered it impossible they should not commit."*

LXXVI. *Answer.* By confounding ideas, the Unitarians endeavour to throw dust in the eyes of their readers. No, God is not the author of original sin, whether we consider it in Adam our first parent, or in his posterity. And first, God is not the author of original sin, as far as it relates to Adam himself, for as such it is manifest, that it had no other cause than the *free will* of Adam, who, contrary to the positive prohibition of God, committed it by his own free choice and determination. Nor is God the author of original sin, as far as that sin exists in and affects the posterity of Adam. For what is original sin, when considered in the posterity of Adam? It is assuredly not their *actual* sin, i. e. not a sin committed by their *own physical free choice*, but by the physical will of Adam, which was morally their own, and which chiefly consists in the privation of sanctifying grace, and in the exclusion from the kingdom of heaven, if this grace be not restored. Now this privation of sanctifying grace, for the very reason that it is a *privation* or *negation*, does not require a certain, determinate, efficient, and positive cause; it is sufficient, that God, in consequence of the sin of Adam, cease to preserve the supernatural habit of sanctifying grace in man; and this is all God does in regard to original sin in the children of Adam; he, therefore, can with as little reason be said to be the author of that sin, as of all other sins, merely because he permits them.

LXXVII. *Objection.* But is it not cruel in the extreme, to doom poor innocent children, who happen to die without baptism, to eternal torments, and that for a fault, which they could not help committing?

Answer. And who damns these children to everlasting torments? Christians, indeed, hold it as an undoubted doctrine, "that unless those children be reborn of water and the holy Ghost, and thus recover the sanctifying grace, which in the

* Unitarian Miscellany, No. 1, vol. 1, page 19.

present order of things is a means absolutely necessary to enter the kingdom of heaven, they cannot enter it, and thus suffer what is called *the pain of loss*, which consists in the exclusion from the beatific vision of God, which being an extraordinary favour, altogether undue to man, God might have refused him, even if he had never sinned. As to sensible and corporeal pains, which God has designed for the punishment of actual sins, of sins committed by the ill use of our senses, it is the general opinion of the best divines, and the common persuasion of all Christians, that they do not suffer them.

This dissertation being already too prolix, it is time to close our observations. The Christian philosopher discovers in this mystery of original guilt, and in the bountiful designs of the Most High, which are connected with it, the reason of all the evils of his condition, an astonishing display of the divine goodness, and the elucidation of most of his doubts. This mystery cheers his drooping spirits by the most sublime hopes, inflames his gratitude towards God, and confidence in him, and presents man with such an order of things, and such a concatenation of events, since the beginning of the world, down to this present day, as raises him above himself, as satisfies his reason and all his desires, at the same time that he knows it to be superior to all the lights of reason, and to all the researches of the philosopher. Why do you, Unitarian, separate these great truths? Why do you erase from the history of religion, that which constitutes its chief beauty and comfort? that mystery, which is the clue to all others, without which, as Paschal remarks, religion becomes an inexplicable enigma, and man a more inconceivable mystery to himself than this mystery is to him?* Original sin is a folly in the eye of the profane sophister, but this folly is wiser than all the wisdom of men: "That which appeareth foolish of God, is wiser than men." 1 Cor. i. 25.

* Pensees de Paschal. "Quod stultum est Dei, sapientius est hominibus."

UNITARIANISM

PHILOSOPHICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY EXAMINED.

NO. IV.

Dissertation on the adorable Mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

" Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, Baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti." *Matt.* 28, *v.* 19.

" Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

SECTION I.

LXXVIII. With a view of proceeding with order and perspicuity on a Mystery, which, of all others, is the most abstruse, and the most impervious to all created understandings, we shall follow the same method which we pursued in the preceding dissertation on Original Sin, and bring the whole matter under several distinct heads. The subject divides itself naturally into the following chapters:

CHAPTER I.

In this chapter we shall give a brief account of the errors, which have been broached, during the lapse of these eighteen hundred years, against the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

CHAPTER II.

Next, we shall investigate, what reason itself, without the aid of Revelation, says on this ineffable Mystery, and whether the Unitarian, without even resorting to the Scriptures, be not forced, by the dictates of reason alone, to admit, not only the possibility of this Mystery, but also its propriety.

CHAPTER III.

In this chapter we shall establish this fundamental dogma of the Trinity, 1st. By plain Scriptural evidence. 2dly. By the concurrent and uniform testimonies of the Fathers of both the Greek and Latin church, especially of those that flourished before the general Council of Nice. 3dly. By the authority of Councils and Symbols of Faith. 4thly. By the constant and perpetual practice and belief of the Church. At the conclusion of which, we shall meet the superannuated sophisms which have been advanced against the Mystery of the Trinity by the Arians; next, in the sixteenth century, by the Socinians; in the seventeenth, by the anti-christrian Sophisters, and, at last, in the eighteenth, by the Unitarians.

CHAPTER IV.

Shall be taken up in establishing the Divinity and Personality of the Holy Ghost, and in exploding the objections of the Pneumatomachi.

CHAPTER I.

A Sketch of the Chief Errors that have been broached, since the beginning of Christianity, against the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

SECTION I.

LXXIX. The Unitarians are not the first that waged war against the Blessed Trinity: this mystery had its enemies from the very origin of Christianity, and the more necessary its belief is for Salvation, on account of its being the chief and fundamental article of the Christian revelation, with the more fury has the spirit of error attacked it even in the primitive ages of the church. Some impugned the distinction of the three divine persons, others denied the unity of one and the same divine nature and essence.

Simon, the Magician.

LXXX. Simon, the magician, a native of Samaria, the ring-leader and forerunner of all future Heresiarchs, was the first to rise up against the Trinity. For, shortly after the death of Christ, he gave out that he himself was the whole Trinity, that he had appeared to the Jews as the *Son*, that he had descended in Samaria as the *Father*, and that he had arrived among other nations as the *Holy Ghost*.* St. Augustin† relates the matter somewhat differently, informing us, that he taught, "that he had given the law of Moses to the Jews on Mount Sinai, in the *person of the Father;* that, in the reign of Tiberius, he had appeared in the *person of the Son*, and that next he had come down upon the Apostles in fiery tongues as the *Holy Ghost*." He, of course, admitted but one person in God. But, by the by, this very imitation of the Trinity, made by this magician, evidently shows, that the belief of the three distinct persons in God, was common among the Christians in the very time of the Apostles.

* St. Irenæus, lib. 1, adversus Hæreses, cap. 22.

† Lib. de Hæresib. cap. 1.

Valentinus, in the second century, in the year 145.

LXXXI. Valentinus, a man of the most extravagant turn of mind, although not wanting either in genius or eloquence, taught, among a thousand other extravagances, that the whole Trinity had suffered on the cross. This we learn from St. Athanasius, lib. 2, cont. Apollinar. Tertullian* informs us that it was pride and ambition that brought him to apostatize from the Catholic faith: "Valentinus, says he, aimed at a Bishoprick, because he was distinguished both for his genius and eloquence; but, feeling indignant at another, who had suffered the torments of martyrdom, being preferred before him, he, to avenge himself of the pretended insult, broke loose from the church, and set about to impugn the truth."

The Montanists in the same century, about the year 172.

These, at least one set of them, maintained, according to Tertullian,† that Christ was at once the *Son and the Father.*

Praxeas, in the year 196.

LXXXII. Praxeas, a native of Asia, and follower of the Montanistic sect, first of all began to spread that heresy at Rome. "Praxeas, (says Tertullian,‡) broached heresy. He affirms, that God the Father Almighty is Jesus Christ himself; and that this (the Father Almighty being no other than Jesus Christ himself,) was crucified, suffered, and died."

Noetus, about the year of Christ 245.

LXXXIII. Noetus, who ought more properly to be called *Anoetus*, as St. Epiphanius remarks, hæresi 57, that is to say, a man without sense or understanding, was born either at Ephesus, if we credit St. Epiphanius, or at Smyrna, as Theodoretus will have it. He maintained that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, had not only one and the same nature, but were moreover but one and the same person, and

* Lib. adversus Valentinianos, cap. 4.

† Lib de Præscript, cap. 52.

‡ Lib. de Præscript, cap. ult.

this he asserted, on the authority of those scriptural passages which altogether exclude the plurality of Gods ; he, of course, concluded that God the Father had suffered for mankind.— He moreover with incredible arrogance and effrontery, styled himself *Moses*, and his brother *Aaron*. He was condemned and cut off from the church, and persisting obstinately in his error to his death, was deprived of the honour of a Christian burial, as we learn from Epiphanius, in the place just quoted.

Sabellius, about the year of Christ 257.

LXXXIV. Sabellius was the most renowned and principal advocate of the above heresy. Hence it is, that all those who deny the real distinction of the three persons in God, have since been called *Sabellians*.

He was born at Ptolemaïs, in Lybia, and maintained that in God there was but one person, as there was but one essence, under the threefold appellation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He was used to explain his error by a similitude drawn from the sun, in which there is a threefold ενεργεία, or efficacy, viz : of *enlightening*, of *warming*, and a *round figure*, or the very discus of the sun. The power of heating, that is to say, the very heat of the sun, corresponds, said he, to the Holy Ghost, the power of emitting light, to the Son, and the Father was as it were the form of the whole person. He therefore gave to one and the same person in God, various names, according to the different offices which that person discharged, or the various effects which it produced. He called the divine person *Father*, when it gave the Mosaic law, *Son*, when it took our nature, *Holy Ghost*, when it descended on the Apostles. St. Dionysius, of Alexandria, wrote against this heresy nominally a letter to Sixtus, the sovereign pontiff. See Eusebius, lib. 7. hist. cap. 5.

All the disciples of Sabellius were called *Patripassians*, because they taught that the Father had suffered for mankind. There were others infected with the same error, such as Paul of Samosata, Photinus, the Priscillianists, &c. of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

We shall likewise abstain, for brevity's sake, from giving a detailed account of those heresies, which, whilst they admitted a plurality of persons in God, seemed at the same time to admit a plurality of Gods, such as that of Apelles, a disciple of Marcion, of Apollinaris, of the Cononites; hastening, as we do, to give a brief list of those sectarians who professed themselves the sworn enemies of the Son of God and of the Holy Ghost, in denying the divinity of both these persons.

SECTION II.

SECTARIANS WHO IMPUGNED THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

Cerinthus.

LXXXV. This heresiarch taught that Christ our Lord was begotten after the ordinary manner, by Joseph and Mary.

Critics are not agreed about the time in which he lived, whether it was in the very age of the Apostles, or only in the second century, in the reign of Adrian, the emperor. St. Irenæus,* and after him, Eusebius,† and Theodoretus,‡ relate, that some had learnt from St. Polycarp, that St. John, when he perceived Cerinthus to be in the baths at Ephesus, precipitately left them, saying: "Let us fly, lest the baths, in which Cerinthus, the enemy of truth is, fall upon us." St. Jerom testifies,§ that the direct and explicit object of St. John, in writing his Gospel, was to refute the impieties of Cerinthus, and especially to establish the divinity of the incarnate word of God, Christ: a manifest sign, that the Gospel of St. John, which at every page presents such clear and irresistible proofs of the divinity of Christ, is to be understood, not as the Unitarians, by manifest distortion, interpret it, but as the whole Christian world has always understood it.

Ebion.

LXXXVI. Ebion, in the same age, imitating the blasphemy of Cerinthus, said that Christ, being but a mere man, was

* Lib. 3, cap. 5. † Lib. 3. histor. cap. 28. et lib. 4. cap. 4.
‡ Lib. 2, Hæret. Fabul. § Lib. de Script. Ecclesiast.

like other men born of Joseph and Mary. This we learn from Eusebius,* Theodoretus,† and others. His disciples were called Ebionites.

Carpocrates, in the second century of the Church.

LXXXVII. This innovator, the founder of a new sect, called the *Gnostics*, than which there was never any more infamous for abominable crimes and debaucheries, adopted the impious doctrines of Cerinthus and Ebion just stated.‡

Theodotus, in the second century.

LXXXVIII. This Theodotus was a native of Byzantium, a tanner by trade; after having denied Jesus Christ in time of persecution, he said, by way of exculpating himself, that it was not God, but a man only, he had offended; that is to say, Christ, whom he declared to be a mere man. See Eusebius, hist. lib. 5, cap. 28, where he calls this Theodotus the first author of this impiety, for which reason he was deprived of the communion of the church by St. Victor, pontiff of Rome. This fact again irrefragably proves against the Unitarians, that in the second century the faith of the divinity of Jesus Christ was the general belief of the Church, and that the martyrs of the three first ages of the Church died for Christ, not as a mere man, but as their true God.

Paul of Samosata, in the year of Christ 260.

LXXXIX. This innovator born at Samosata in Mesopotamia on the Euphrates, was made bishop of Antioch, under the reign of Valerian and Galien Emperors, as St. Epiphanius informs us.§ His dissolute and scandalous manners are described by the bishops of the second council of Antioch, which was held against him, in the celebrated epistle, which they wrote to St. Dionysius, bishop of the city of Rome, and

* Lib. 6, cap. 17.

† Lib. 2, Hæretic. Fabular. cap. 1.

‡ St. Irenæus apud Euseb. lib. 4, hist. cap. 7. St. Augustin. tom 8, p. 8.

§ Hæresi. 2, page 128.

to Maximus, bishop of Alexandria. Eusebius* gives this epistle in these words. "Receding from the rule of faith, say they, he passed over to an impious and spurious doctrine; and whereas he was before poor and a beggar, and had no property at all, either left by his parents or acquired by any kind of business, he had now accumulated immense wealth, through crimes, sacrileges, and extortions practised on his brethren. He abolished the psalms that were used to be sung to the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, as novel and recently composed by men, and had hymns sung to his own praise, on Easter day, by a number of women, in the midst of the church." He that wishes to know more about the profligacy of his manners, is referred to the epistle just mentioned.

His impious error chiefly consisted in asserting that Christ had not always been, and had not existed before the blessed virgin Mary, and that of course, he was not true God. All this we learn from St. Hilary,† from the above epistle of the second council of Antioch,‡ and from Marius Mercator.‖ This unhallowed system was greedily adopted by the Socinians, and in our days by the Unitarians.

Two councils were held at Antioch against this heresiarch. The first, in the year of our Lord 264, when St. Dionysius filled the chair of St. Peter at Rome. In this council, diligent investigation was made into his doctrine; but feigning himself orthodox, and giving hopes of amendment, the crafty innovator escaped for this time, the sentence of condemnation; but in the next council of Antioch, assembled against

* Euseb. L. 7. ch. 30. Οπȣ δε αποστασ τȣ κανονοσ επι κιβδηλα ϗ νοθα διδαγματα μετεληλυθεν, ȣδεν δει -κ. τ. λ.——προτερον πενησ ων ϗ πτωχοσ—παρα πατερων παραλαβων μηδεμιαν ευποριαν μητε εκ τεχνησ η τινοσ επιτηδευματοσ κτησαμενοσ, νυν εισ υπερβαλλοντα πλȣτον εληλακεν εξ ανομιων ϗιεροσυλιων——Ψαλμȣσ δε τȣσ μεν εισ τον κυριον ημων Ιησȣν Χριστον παυσασ, ωσ δη νεωτερȣσ και νεωτερων αν δρων συγγραμματα εισ αυτον δε εν μεσῃ τῃ εκκλησιᾳ τῃ μηγαλη τȣ Πασχȣ ημερᾳ ψαλμῳδειν γυναικασ παρασκευων.

† Lib. de Synodis. ‡ Apud. Euseb. ‖ Tom. 2. page 128.

him in the year 270, at which eighty bishops were present, "Paul, the forger of that nefarious heresy at Antioch, was convicted, says Eusebius,* and being manifestly found guilty by all of a false dogma, he was lopped off from the whole Catholic church diffused all over the globe." In his place was chosen Domnus, a man adorned with all that became a bishop. But as he refused to quit the house of the bishop, "the Emperor Aurelius was applied to, who most judiciously settled the business, by commanding that possession of the house should be given to those, to whom the Italian bishops of the Christian religion, and the Roman pontiff should adjudge it. After this manner, this innovator was, with the greatest ignominy, driven out from the church by the secular power." See Eusebius in the place just quoted. With such public and solemn facts staring the Unitarians in the face, it must appear more than surprising to hear them unblushingly assert, that the belief in the divinity of Christ, was not the common doctrine of the primitive ages of the church.

Arius, from whom the Arians came.

XC. Arius, born in that part of Lybia, which borders on Egypt, and is subject to Alexandria, as we learn from St. Epiphanius, attacked the divinity of the Eternal Word, Jesus Christ, with unbridled effrontery. He was of a most crafty turn of mind, a lover of novelties, and initiated in all the Dialectic subtleties. He first adhered to the schism of Meletius, but having renounced it, he was ordained deacon by by St. Peter, bishop of Alexandria, but as he returned again to Meletius, he was cut off from the church by the same Peter of Alexandria, with other schismatics; but having again crept into the church upon the demise of St. Peter, he was ordained priest, and made curate of some parish. At last when he saw that Alexander had been preferred before him

* Euseb. Lib. 7. c. 29. Φωραθεισ, και προσ απαντων ηδη σαφωσ καταγνωσθεισ ετεροδοξιαν ο τησ κατα Αντιοχειαν αιρεσεωσ αρχηγοσ, τησ υπο τον ωρανον καθολικησ εκκλησιασ αποκηρυτθειαι

to the episcopal dignity of Alexandria, bursting with ambition and envy, he broke out into open heresy against the divinity of the *Word*, in the year of our Lord 317. His error was immediately condemned by Alexander, who had succeeded St. Peter, but not extinguished. Hence Constantine the Great deputed Osius, bishop of Corduba, a prelate of great authority and prudence to Alexandria, in order to extinguish this fire that had just broken out, but to no purpose; for the audacity and impiety of Arius increasing every day more and more, the Church was compelled to convoke the first of all Œcumenical councils, the council of Nice, in Bythinia, in the year of our Lord 325, in which Arius and his adherents were condemned, the divinity of the *Eternal Word* was asserted, and the word ὁμοσιος, *consubstantial*, inserted in the symbol. The Nicene fathers being struck with horror at this new impiety, the Arians, with a view of declining the odium of such impious doctrine, undertook to soothe its harshness, and so branched out into three different sects; pure and rigid Arians, Semiarians, and a third class, who were neither the one nor the other.

The Arian doctrine was identically the same with that of the Unitarians, viz. that the *Word* had not always been, but had been made out of nothing, and that, of course, Christ was a mere creature.*

Photinus.

XCI. Photinus, bishop of Smyrna, disciple of Marcellus, of Ancyra, taught,† that Christ, even as the *Word*, had had his beginning from Mary, and that he had not existed before her, for which impiety he was deposed from his see by Basil, of Ancyra, the chief head of the Semiarians, in a council at Smyrna.

* See the Epistle of Alexander to the bishops of his province, in Socrates lib. 1, Hist. cap. 6. p. 10. et. 11.

† Marius Victorinus, lib. 2, contra Arium. S. Leo, Serm. 4. de Nativ. Christi, cap. 5.

Michael Servetus.

XCII. Servetus, a Spaniard, and physician by profession, wrote, in the year 1531, seven books, which he entitled, *On the Errors of the Trinity.* He was such an impious and abandoned wretch, that Bucer did not hesitate to pronounce him from the pulpit worthy to be torn in pieces. Calvin had him condemned and burnt alive, at Geneva, with his writings, in the year 1553, on the 27th day of October.

Valentin Gentilis.

XCIII. Servetus had for companion of his impiety, Valentin Gentilis, an Italian, who, by a feint repentance, got out of the prison, into which Calvin had thrown him at Geneva, and after having made some stay in Savoy, was called to Poland by Blandrata and Alciatus, and continued there till they fell out among themselves: for Alciatus turned out Mahometan, and Blandrata took up a new impiety of a certain Francis David. Valentin Gentilis, after various flights from country to country, was at last beheaded for his impiety by a decree of the Senate of Berne, in Switzerland.

The Socinians.

XCIV. Lœlius Socinus, a nobleman of Sienna in Italy, extended the principles of the reformation, which he had at first imbibed, to such length, as to overthrow the whole system of revelation; for after having thrown off the authority of the church, and having no other rule of faith left than his own reason, he carried it as far as it could go, viz: till he had torn away from the Christian system, all that his reason could not conceive, and, of course, all mysteries, exactly after the same manner and on the same principle, as the Unitarians in our days reject all the mysteries of religion. After various travels and expulsions, he died at last at Zurich in Switzerland, in the year 1562. He was a man of a most petulant genius, of a very intemperate criticism, and extraordinarily fond of dialectic and grammatical quibbles. His nephew, Faustus Socinus, propagated the sect chiefly through Tran-

sylvania in Poland. He and his disciples were so detested every where, that they no sooner arrived in any country than they were banished by public authority.*

Socinus imbibed as it were the venom of all former heretics, and endeavoured to revive or resuscitate from their embers, their long-since forgotten errors. His doctrine on the Trinity was as follows: He taught,

XCV. 1st. That in God there were not three distinct persons, but that there was one only God, as to nature and person. The same was taught by Valentinus, Praxeas, Noetus, Sabellius, &c.

2d. That the Father only was that one, supreme, eternal, and immutable God, one not only in nature, but also in person; that the Word of the Father, or the Son, was a mere creature created out of nothing, although more noble than other creatures. This was the very dogma of the Arians.

3d. That Christ was a pure man, begotten after the common manner of other men, by Joseph and Mary; who of course existed not before he was born of Mary, except in the mind of God by his foreknowledge. Cerinthus, Ebion, Paul of Samosata, and Photinus had taught the same.

4th. That Christ notwithstanding may be called God, not indeed as to nature, but as to grace and adoption, on account of the excellent power and virtue with which the Father had endowed him.

5th. That Christ, indeed, was resuscitated by God and sent into the world for the salvation of mankind, but that he did not, properly speaking, atone for the sins of mankind.

6th. That, finally, the Holy Ghost was not a true person in God, but only God's power and efficacy; no two systems can be more like each other than this and the Unitarian are.

I shall conclude this paragraph with the beautiful remark of Eusebius on the jarring sects, which the spirit of error raised from the very commencement of the Church against the above mysteries: "By these artifices the devil did by no

* The remains of Socinus were dug up in 1658, and, being brought to the frontiers of Little Tartary, were, by being discharged from a cannon, cast disgracefully into the land of the Infidels.

means succeed for any length of time; for the truth proved and recommended itself, and with the progress of time shone forth daily with more lustre. The contrary happened to the inventions of its enemies, which bearing with them their own refutation, were immediately extinguished; sects upon sects growing out from the first, whilst the former continually dissolved themselves, and each one in divers manners dwindled away into multifarious species of errors; but the Catholic church, which only is true, always like unto herself and constant in her belief, was by new accessions every day increased, striking, by her grave and sincere comportment, by her noble freedom, and finally, by her modesty, and the sanctity of a certain divine life and philosophy, the eyes not only of all the Greeks, but also of the barbarians."*

Third class of Sectarians that impugned the Divinity of the Holy Ghost.

XCVI. St. Ignatius of Antioch, in his Epistle to the Trallians, remarks, that at the very time of the Apostles, there were some that erred about the Holy Ghost. The same is related of the Sadducees, by St. Epiphanius, hæres 14, of Valentin, by St. Athanasius, in his oration against the Arians.

XCVII. But the chief rebel against the divinity of the Holy Ghost, was Macedonius, who, through the favour of the Arians, whose heresy he followed, was thrust into the See of Constantinople, after having thrown out of it its lawful bishop Paul, not without much slaughter and bloodshed, from which he was afterwards deposed by the same Emperor Constantius,

* Euseb. lib. 4, cap 7. Ουκ εις μακρον γε μην αυτω ταυτα προχωρει, της αληθειας αυτης εαυτην συνεστωσης, επι μεγα τε φως κατα τον προϊοντα χρονον διαλαμπουσης εσβεστο μεν γαρ αυτικα, προς αυτης ενεργειας απελεγχομενα τα των εχθρων επιτεχνηματα, αλλων επ' αλλαις αιρεσεων καινοτομουμενων, υπορρεουσων αει των προτερων, και εις πολυτροπους και πολυμορφους ιδεας αλλοτε αλλως φθειρομενων πρηνει δ' εις αυξησιν κ' μεγεθος, αει κατα ταυτα κ' ωσαυτως εχουσα, η της καθολου και μονης αληθους εκκλησιας λαμπροτης, το σεμνον κ' ειλικρινες και ελευθεριον, το, τε σωφρον κ' καθαρον της ενθεου πολιτειας τε και φιλοσοφιας εις απαν γενος Ελληνων τε κ' Βαρβαρων απεστιλβουσα.

on account of a sedition which he raised among the people, and then it was that he set about forging a new heresy, in the year of our Lord 360; viz. he stript the Holy Ghost of his Divinity, asserting that he was a mere creature or minister of God, far inferior to God, as to nature, dignity, and honour.

This heresy was proscribed in various councils at Alexandria, after the return of St. Athanasius in the year of our Lord 362; two synods, held at Rome under Pope Damasus; and lastly, in the second Œcumenic council, which was the first general council of Constantinople, in the year 381, whose definitions we shall produce in its proper place.

The Socinians, and in our days the Unitarians, have espoused the same error. Such were the irreligious systems which proud reason, left to itself, and emboldened by the spirit of darkness has contrived since the Apostolic age down to this present day, against the most august mystery of the blessed Trinity. Such is the venerable pedigree of the ancestors of the Unitarian family. Not to speak of their personal character, which, as it undeniably appears from the above sketch, did very little honour to their new systems, it is a fact, that their profane innovations excited, at all times, a general horror throughout the whole Christian world, and that they all met with a solemn condemnation on the part of the universal church, which one fact proves to a demonstration that the uniform belief of the church of Christ was ever in direct opposition to the Unitarian doctrines.

CHAPTER II.

XCVIII. As the age in which we live, is incessantly boasting of being, by way of excellence, the age of *reason*, and as our opponents would fain make the present generation believe, that it is in conformity with the dictates of sound reason, that they disbelieve the mysteries of revelation, it will not be amiss to come to close quarters with these gentlemen, and by meeting them in the entrenchments of a false philo-

sophy, in which they deem themselves impregnable, to make it appear, that, as both the light of reason, and the light of revelation, are gifts equally descending from one and the same original source, the Father of Lights, there exists an admirable harmony between reason and revelation, and that it is impossible to attack the one without becoming inconsistent with the other. For, "God is a God of peace and concord, and not of confusion."* In the present chapter, therefore, we shall investigate, what reason alone, left to its own light, says on the ineffable mystery of the Trinity, and see, whether sound logic, even without the aid of revelation, will not force the Unitarian, willing or unwilling, to admit the possibility and reasonableness of this mystery.

XCIX. Far be it from me, however, to presume to dive into, and to fathom the infinite depths of the ineffable and incomprehensible nature of God, or to pretend to explain what infinitely surpasses all created understanding. For I am not ignorant of what the most brilliant geniuses have left written on this very subject. St. Hilary, in discoursing on the generation of the divine Word,† says, "I am ignorant, of the manner and mode of this generation, I do not enquire into it, and still I console myself. The archangels know it not, the angels have not heard it, the ages possess it not; it was not revealed to the prophets, the apostles did not interrogate about it, the Son himself did not inform us of it. Let there be an end to our painful complaints. How, therefore, do the ungodly not blush to babble of such matters, adds St. Athanasius,‡ to search into which is iniquity? They, I say, who are but men, and who are not even able to unravel the nature of those earthly objects that surround them? Nay, let them explain to us even what belongs to their own persons, and see whether they understand their own nature. It is impossible,

* "Non enim est dissentionis Deus, sed pacis." 1 Corinth. xiv. 33.

† "Ego nescio, non requiro; et consolor me tamen. Archangeli nesciunt, angeli non audierunt, sæcula non tenent, propheta non sensit, apostolus non interrogavit, filius ipse non edidit. Cesset dolor *querelarum*." St. Hilarius, lib. 2. de Trinit. N. 9.

‡ Tom. 1 p. 107.

continues St. Ambrose,* to understand the secret of the generation of the divine Word. The mind fails, the voice is silent, not mine only but also that of the angels; this mystery is above the powers, above the angels, above the cherubs, above the seraphs, above all conception."———

"What kind of disputation, says St. Augustin, what strength or power of understanding, what keenness of reason, what acuteness of thought will be able to show, how the Trinity exists?"† "This mystery is great, it is to be revered, not to be scrutinized. How is plurality in unity, and unity in plurality? To search after this, is rashness, to believe it, is piety, to know it, is the way and life eternal."‡

This being premised, let us approach the mystery of the blessed Trinity with the most profound adoration, and, if we consult reason on a mystery that exceeds all created understanding, let it be with a view, not of comprehending what of its nature is incomprehensible, but with a view of showing the profane reasoner, that our faith is a reasonable faith—*rationabile obsequium nostrum.*"‖

SECTION I.

The production or the creation of this universe, out of nothing in time, furnishes us with some kind of proof of the existence of another hidden and eternal production, out of the very nature of God from all eternity.

PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS.

C. In reflecting on the infinite essence of God, we easily conceive that God, from all eternity, exists immutable and

* "Impossibile est generationis, (verbi divini,) scire secretum: mens deficit, vox silet, non mea tantum, sed et angelorum; supra potestates, supra angelos, supra cherubim, supra seraphim, supra omnem sensum est." St. Ambrosius, lib. 1. de Fide ad Gratian: Augustum, cap. 10.

† "Quis disputandi modus, quænam tandem vis intelligendi et potentia, quæ vivacitas rationis, quæ acies cogitationis ostendet—quomodo sit Trinitas?" St. Aug. lib. 15. de Trinitate, cap. 16. N. 9.

‡ "Sacramentum hoc magnum est, et quidem venerandum, non scrutandum quomodo pluralitas in unitate, aut ipsa in pluralitate? Scrutari hoc temeritas est; credere pietas; nosse, via et vita æterna." St. Bernardus lib. 5. de considerat: cap. 8.

‖ Rom. xii. 1.

immoveable in himself, i. e. in his own adorable essence; but although God be thus immoveable, still he is all in action, in activity, in vigour; he peoples the heavens with his creatures, he preserves them, provides for them, and rejoices them, in pressing continually to his amorous and paternal bosom those myriads of beings, whom he draws out of nothing by his life-giving power, and he himself is delighted, in beholding in the beautiful features of those beings, a reverberation of his uncreated and eternal splendours. But, pray, what is this omnipotent activity, this incessant creation, this provident preservation of his creatures? What else but an atom, when compared with the immensity and the infinite energy of God?

O supreme intelligence! O ineffable wisdom! O inexhaustible power, are these perchance all thy works? Where is, O my God, the magnificence of thy infinite grandeur? But if thou be well pleased at beholding in thy creatures a faint and limited reverberation of thy uncreated and eternal splendours, how much more delighted wilt thou feel in contemplating in *themselves* those very same splendours, those very same substantial eternal and uncreated beauties? If thou operatest in time, wilt thou not likewise operate in eternity? If thou makest show of so great, so extensive a vigour in this created universe, wilt thou be without strength in the uncreated universe of thy essence?

CI. In contemplating man and the innumerable species of animals, insects, birds, fish, and quadrupeds, among the many and different endowments, with which we find them enriched, two peculiar qualities which are common to all, arrest our attention. We are struck at observing how all these creatures are gifted with two qualities, the one *natural*, the other *artificial*. From the sight of the admirable work of a cobweb, of a bird's nest, of the retired cell of the hornet, gradually ascending to the skillful cabin of the beaver, stupor and astonishment seize our mind. But when the works of men, so variegated, so original, so grand, are presented to our view, then

indeed, feeling most deeply impressed, we cannot refrain from paying our tribute of praise to his creating and sublime mind; but how wonderful soever these works may be, how surprising soever their principles, their consequences and their ends, still those works remain always foreign and extrinsic to the nature of the *inventors*. These animals, and these men, work or operate in this case as far as they are *artists*, not as far as they are *animals or men*. The nature of the inventor is always something more noble than the thing invented. But when we see a fish sporting in the waters with his young ones, a bird administering food to his exulting little offspring, a man who tenderly presses his darlings, who surround him, and lisp with him, to his bosom, then we begin more rapturously to admire that quality, that strength, that passion which the sovereign creator has infused into his creatures, by which they bring forth beings like unto themselves, and naturally operate with effects which are so much more exalted and more noble. If we have found God working in time, on a matter foreign to his nature, if we have found him a most wise architect of all his creatures, shall we not find him also operating from *all eternity* in his own nature? Shall we not find him a *producer of a divine progeny?* If we have discovered in God a less noble perfection, viz. that of producing without himself in time, shall we not admit in him the more noble perfection, namely, that of producing within himself from all eternity? He that has imparted fecundity to created beings, shall he be barren within himself?* "Shall not I, that make others to bring forth children, myself bring forth, says the Lord? Shall I, that give generation to others, be barren, says the Lord thy God?"

SECTION II.

CII. Here the reasoning on the blessed Trinity begins. The production which belongs to God as far as he is *God*, is more

* Isaiah lxvi. 9.

worthy of him than the production, which belongs to him as supreme *artist* and *creator*. This is undeniable from the preliminary observations. But the production of a God from God, i. e. from his own substance, belongs to God as far as he is *God*. Therefore, the production is more excellent and more noble than the production of the universe, which belongs to God, only as far as he is an infinitely wise *architect*, a *creator*.* The former belongs to God in as far as he is *God*, because it is connatural, proper, and intrinsic to God, but the latter belongs to God as *creator*, because it is extrinsic to him and artificial. The creation exists; therefore there exists the less worthy and less noble production; if the less worthy and less noble production exists, shall there not have been, and shall there not be, prior to it, the more worthy, the more noble, the more excellent, the more glorious production? The perfection of the divine essence will not permit us to doubt of it. The divine nature being of infinite virtue, and of infinite vigour, is sovereignly active, and the divine perfections being all infinite, they arrive in their full energy to the highest degree possible. This once established, I reason thus: the productive force in the divine nature is better than its contrary; if it be a perfection, it will be in God infinite without boundaries, without measure, without limits, therefore the Supreme Being will be able to produce also intrinsically, within his own nature, and we shall have an incontestable right to advance that he does so, until it be clearly demonstrated that the thing is impossible, from its implying some contradiction or repugnancy.

* In the first production which belongs to God as far as he is *God*, God acts with all the extent and power of all his perfections taken together; he acts with a strength without restriction and without limits, and thus communicates all his most perfect substance, his divinity, and his ownself entirely; but when he acts as *creator*, he sets boundaries and limits to himself, and does not do all that he is able to do, and communicates but in limited measure some certain images of his beauties, and behold here the reason, why the production which belongs to God as far as he is *God*, is more worthy of him than the production which belongs to God as far as he is the sovereign *artist and creator*.

CIII. But although God might do it, does it follow that he has done it? The inference from the power to the act, say the logicians, is not correct, is not just; *a posse ad actum non valet consequentia.*

To this I answer: If God had not been sweetly and actually necessitated from all eternity to that intrinsic production, this production could not, and would never have existed, because the divine nature will always be what it always was, without being subject to any revolution, or to any change; and this being a production intrinsic to the divine essence, if it had not existed from *all eternity*, the divine essence would be altered at the moment, it would begin to exist. This production, therefore, either was always, or it can never be, there exists, therefore, in the divine Being something useless, for in that case the power of producing intrinsically would be useless; useless would be the infinity of the productive force.* But this implies repugnancy, and is impossible; therefore the production intrinsic to the divine essence has always been. If the productive force of God in its infinity be highest, it must produce an infinite and a highest term, or else it would not produce according to its full extent, and thus it would appear frustraneous. This infinite and this highest term cannot be drawn from nothing, therefore this productive eternal, immense and great force must draw from itself or from the divine nature an eternal, an immense, a grand production, and thus you see that the most worthy and the noblest production in God must be intrinsic to his essence.

A Being actually infinite, a Being infinite in all perfections, cannot be drawn out of nothing: for if it could be drawn out of nothing, there might exist two Beings actually infinite, infinite in all perfections, a Being existing *of himself*, and another drawn out *of nothing*; but the supposed possibility of such

* If this force or power has not produced *from all eternity*, it is impossible that it should ever produce; it is therefore useless. On the contrary the force productive of effects foreign to the divine nature has produced, produces, and will produce, and of course will never be useless, because God made, makes, and will continue to make use of it.

two infinite Beings involves contradiction, therefore an infinite Being cannot be drawn out of nothing. That the supposed possibility of two such infinite Beings involves contradiction, is clearer than noon-day, for those two Beings would be on the one hand actually infinite, and infinite in all perfections, and on the other, the one would not have the nature of the other, since the one would be a Being *of himself*, and the other a Being *of another*; therefore neither of them would be actually infinite and immense. It is, consequently, only from his own nature, without dividing it, that the supreme, immense, and great Being, can draw another supreme, immense, and great one, and if he draws him from his own nature, the production cannot but be a substantial and perfect image of the producer, since on the one side he acts with infinite vigour and force, and on the other his nature cannot be divided.

CIV. God took delight in the outward production, as is that of the universe, and the actual existence of this universe affords us an evidence of it; for if he had not been well pleased in creating it, it would never have existed: there is, therefore, complacency in God, and this complacency may be the highest, it may be infinite; and such a complacency always increases more and more, according as the object produced comes nearer to the resemblance of the producer. Hence it is that God certainly delights more in the creation of man, and derives from it greater pleasure, than from the creation of inferior creatures: but such a delight, such a complacency, cannot but be transient, accidental, and foreign to the divine essence.

But then only is God's complacency substantial and infinite, when he turns his divine look on his intrinsic production, then indeed is the affluence of pleasure, of content, and joy, carried to the highest degree, to an absolute extreme or termination, for in that production he beholds not a being that resembles him, but another self, great of great, wise of wise, God of God, of his own indivisible essence, eternal, infinite, and immense; if there be in God complacency in his production, that complacency must be infinite in every respect, because he is infinite in every regard; therefore his complacency

must be in every respect and intensely infinite. But if this complacency be intensely infinite, it cannot be derived from a finite and limited object; it must therefore flow from an unlimited and infinite object—but this actually infinite and unlimited object cannot but be God; consequently if there be in God infinite complacency in producing, it cannot come but from an intrinsic production, for which only it can be intensively infinite, and that *from all eternity*, and antecedently to the whole creation. I say, *from all eternity*, because the divine essence, which at no time can undergo either change or alteration, must exist from *eternity*. I say next, *antecedently to the whole creation*, because God cannot behold any outward being before beholding his own nature; since it is in his essence he beholds all things, but when he turns his own content, his own complacency and delight to his intrinsic production, this act of complacency causes it immediately to exist, or else it would not be infinitely perfect, and intensely infinite, since it would be destitute of the first of all perfections, which is to be *existing:* and behold! thence it is eternal, immense, intelligent, most simple, the true real, and perfect image of the living God, the only light of the light, the great of the great, God of God.

CV. God not only is well pleased at the creating act by which he draws from nothing millions of created beings, but he likewise rejoices at and delights in their perpetual society, bearing them and preserving them most amorously in his bosom. If, therefore, the society of beings called from nothing into existence, of beings circumscribed and finite, of beings which, when compared with him, what perfection soever they may possess, are no more at most than a dim spark in comparison with the sun; if, I say, the society of such beings be so sweet and pleasant to him, how much ampler redundancy of joy, how much more extensive affluence of sweetness, will he enjoy in a production from his own indivisible nature, equal to him in all things, in eternity, in immensity, in omnipotence?

Let us reflect, that if this one production were not to exist in the divine nature, God would be wanting of that infinite

joy of which we are speaking; but this cannot be, joy as well as knowledge, being infinite in God, it follows, of course, that it is not conceivable that this one production, consubstantial to his uncreated producer, and for this reason, eternal, omnipotent, and immense, like himself, should not exist.

SECTION III.

The above Reasoning continued.

CVI. If we analyze the natural properties and qualities of the created beings, we find that they are all directed towards one end, viz. to the felicity which is proper and peculiar to each created being, there is not one among his creatures that indicates a direct intention of the Creator that it should be unhappy. We behold gifts and endowments scattered with a kind of profusion by the sovereign Creator, and we admire a certain, I had almost said, most generous and noble-minded prodigality, which replenishes every place with the bounty and beneficence of God, the giver of all good. Such a manner of acting gives us to understand, that in the essence of God there exists a certain connatural propensity to communicate graces, gifts, and endowments; for if God had not such a generous tendency he would not assuredly have dispensed so profusedly and superabundantly the treasures of his created magnificences to his creatures. This tendency, this kind and beneficent propensity in God, is a perfection, but if it be a perfection in God, must it not be infinite to the highest degree? and if it be infinite to the highest degree, must it not contain the *good* and the *better? To be able to give*, is assuredly estimable and praiseworthy, but *actually to give*, is still more worthy of esteem and more commendable. It is more noble to give or communicate a substantial, original, and eternal beauty, than one created from nothing, and in time; it is more suitable to and worthy of the supreme good to communicate his *own and intrinsic best*, than to form an outward and extrinsic one, which is as much inferior to him as the created

is beneath the uncreated, the finite beneath the infinite. If, therefore, such a propensity to give, must contain the *good* and the *better*, and if we have already admired the *good* in the creatures, we must needs affirm that the *better* must exist too, although incomprehensible to us. We must then affirm, that God has given, and is actually giving, all his own beautiful and *best* intrinsic, substantial and eternal to another, and this after an admirable manner, without dividing, diminishing, or losing it; and we must likewise say, that the creature made out of nothing, whatever may be its perfection, for the very reason that it is finite and circumscribed, is not and cannot be capable of receiving into itself all the amiable, all the divine essence, which in every respect is absolutely infinite, and that, of course, the receiver cannot be but of the same indivisible nature, equally noble, equally great, and equally infinite in all perfections, as the supreme donor and communicator, God.

CVII. Is not such a communication the greatest? does it not go as far as it can extend? What can God give more than his own nature, than all his beautiful, all his amiable, all his great and perfect, in a word, than all himself? or to speak more properly, what can God give more than the fulness of all beauty, of all excellence, of all amiability? Amiability, excellency, and beauty, so extensive and so great, that the most penetrating and most sublime created understanding will never, by itself, reach so far as to form the most distant idea of it? Ah! surely not to have nor wish to retain the least beauty, without communicating it and rendering it common with another, is a greatness which deserves all the praises and applauses of all created and possible intelligences.

And behold, without being aware, as it were, we see ourselves compelled to admit in the divine nature one that gives all his substance, and another that receives it, without in the least dividing the indivisible nature, and without destroying the perfect unity; the nature of the one being the nature of the other; and the intelligence, the bounty, and the perfection of the one, that of the other. The one and the other is God,

but one only divinity, common to both. The one as well as the other is immense, but the immensity is only one; nay, the divinity, and immensity, and every other attribute, are God himself.

We shall clear up, as far as possible, the abstruseness of these observations, and the very same human reason, which we are foolishly told rises up in contradiction to them, shall steadily walk before us, and serve us as an escort and a light to guide our steps. Reason shall never depart from our side, nor abandon us, until, conscious of its own imbecility and insufficiency, it point out to us a higher and surer light, and then leave us.

SECTION IV.

The Plurality of Persons in the Supreme Unity of God.

CVIII. Our mode of reasoning has insensibly conducted us to admit in the divine nature, two persons, one that communicates all his beauty, all his essence, and another which receives it, that is to say, a producer and a produced. Let us continue.

The divine essence is infinite, indivisible and most simple: having no parts, it cannot be communicated but whole, nor be received but whole; and being indivisible, it is necessary that the producer and the produced have one only and the same *numerical* nature, one only and the same most simple substance, who differ in no other way than that one is the giver, and the other the receiver; the first having the essence of himself, and the other of the first. But in as far as the producer, considered as *producer*, is not the *produced*, and the produced, in as far as he is *produced*, is not the *producer*, there is between them a true and real distinction, not in nature, but in persons, because the one is not the other, although they have the same divinity, the same identical essence. For as the essence of God cannot communicate itself but whole, nor be received but whole, it being simple and indivisible, it follows, by a necessary consequence, that the *producer* has communicated all his beauties, all his grandeurs, all his per-

fections to the *produced*, and as the supreme being and sovereign communicator has nought within himself but what is infinitely amiable and perfect, and as he has communicated it whole and entire, without losing it, because in the same indivisible nature, it consequently follows, that what the *producer* has, the *produced* likewise has, and that which the produced has, the producer has also in a supreme and perfect equality.

Therefore the produced and the producer are perfectly and substantially equal, and there is no other difference between them, than that the one is the producer and the other the produced. But on account of this difference it does not follow, that the produced is less than the producer, for the producer and the produced have one and the same undivided numerical nature, the same beauties, the same sublimity, the same perfections.

CIX. But at least, some or other will reply, at least they will not be co-eternal; and the producer will be at least an instant older than the produced, since he must first exist, and then only produce.

If we take creatures and the ideas which result from them, for the rule of our judgment, this objection will no doubt appear insoluble and victorious. But if, devested of prejudices, we soar to the solidity of a true reasoning, to the exalted and sublime essence of God, the matter will appear quite otherwise to us. Creatures are subject to a succession of time, one day they were not, then they are, and bring forth other creatures like unto themselves; but for the divine essence, there is no succession of time, the divine essence is pure: IT IS, therefore it always was, and will always be for each and every instant what it is; if it be eternal, as we have demonstrated it to be, it must be entirely eternal; nay, its very mode of existing must always have been as it is. But if the inward producer had been but for one, even the smallest instant, without the produced, in that one smallest instant the divine, immutable essence would not have been what *it is at present*, with its produced, and, of course, it would not have been in every moment such as it is; therefore, either the divine essence is not al-

ways what *it is*, or the produced is co-eternal with the producer; the first destroys the immutable idea of God, and involves contradiction; therefore, we must necessarily assert the perfect equality in the eternity of the one and of the other. Let it be observed, that the intellectuality and the perfect spirituality of the divine essence being once established on solid and unshaken foundations, there must needs be admitted in it a production altogether spiritual and intellectual, after such a manner as may be worthy of the Deity. Moreover, let notice be taken, that the producer does not produce with the intellect but only one natural and necessary product, because this terminates and exhausts all its infinite power, and also because God, acting with infinite activity, naturally operates with his intellect in one sole act with all that intensity of strength with which it is possible for him to act by the same intellect. These truths being once established, why should I not be allowed to say, that this production, being by the means of the intellect, *natural* and *necessary*, the produced is, for the very same reason, the image of the producer? Who can reasonably blame me, that I should call such a productive act, because natural, by the name of generation? Shall I not be allowed to call him *Father*, who produces, and his product, *Son;* this being equally immense, equally amiable, equally great, and a perfect image of the other? Shall I not be allowed to style such a Son, the *word* and *wisdom of the Father*, because he is produced by the intellectual comprehension of himself? I find no reason to the contrary; nay, a certain congruity and propriety, it would seem, entice me to such denominations.

SECTION VIII.

The same subject continued.

CX. The producer understands and knows himself; he understands and knows the whole beauty, the whole sublimity, the whole perfections, which he communicates to his product. He turns towards him the immense overflowings of his great-

est, of his most ardent and intense complacencies, and beholding in him another self, he cannot but be sweetly delighted in him, nor can his will refrain from loving him with all the love of which his will is capable, that is, with infinite love. The produced equally intelligent, seeing that he has his origin from the producer, and that he comes from him great, excellent, perfect, and wholly equal unto him, beholds himself endowed with a will capable of infinite love; beyond all doubt, therefore, that will and that love is tending from him towards his producer, who is his origin, his principle, another self, with all intensiveness and with all sweetness: Therefore the Father most ardently loves the Son, and the Son most ardently loves the Father. But this reciprocal love of the Father to the Son, and of the Son to the Father, is neither the Father nor the Son; it is therefore, I know not what of, a third thing, but in the divine Essence as being most simple, accidentalities repugn, therefore that third thing is not accidental, but has a true and real subsistence, different from the subsistence of the Father and of the Son, in the common nature of the Father and of the Son. Love co-eternal to the one and to the other, because the one and the other eternal and immutable were never for the smallest instant without loving each other with the same ardour and intenseness, with which at present they love each other, and will love each other for ever. Infinite love, fullness of all beauty, of all greatness, of all perfection, because he proceeds from the Father, who retains within himself all beauty, all grandeur, all perfection, from the infinite Father, who infinitely loves; and because he proceeds from the Son, in all things equal to the Father, from the infinite Son, and who infinitely breathes love.

CXI. Behold the two distinct productions in God, I say, two only, because God by two operations turns himself to himself, viz. by knowing himself thoroughly and by loving himself infinitely; but one of these operations is by the way of the understanding, and the other by the way of the will, and from these two operations, two products really distinct among themselves, and distinct from the producer, come forth. These

products are perfectly equal, because they have the same identity of essence, the same divinity; as the Son is equal in all things to the Father, and the Father to the Son, so the Holy Ghost is in all things equal to the Father, and equal in all things to the Son. We call him the third, because he proceeds from the Father and from the Son, but he is co-eternal with the Father, and co-eternal with the Son. We call him the third with regard to his origin, not with regard to time. The Father, the head and fountain of the Deity, has his being of himself, and as *Father*, the Son receives the essence from the Father, and is co-eternal with the Father, nearly after the same manner as if the sun were eternal, his ray would be co-eternal with him, but this same essence is in him as in the *Son*, not as in the *Father*. The Holy Ghost receives his being from the Father and the Son as from one only principle, but this being is in him, not after the manner of a Father or after the manner of a *Son*, but after the manner of *one that proceeds from both*, because he proceeds and comes from the will of the Father and from the will of the Son, he being the love of the Father and the love of the Son.

SECTION VI.

The subject concluded.

CXII. It is altogether incomprehensible to the human mind how one and the same indivisible substance can be really found in several distinct persons. All the efforts of the most assiduous and profound contemplation serve only to make us conceive that this may be so, but not that it is so. Let us see the matter still clearer. Experience, as we have just seen, shows, that the more noble and worthy the various kinds of creatures are, the more they recede from plurality, and approach in some manner to unity. The nature of reasonable animals, of men, is one nature only in its species, but not in number, and although human nature be found in all men, notwithstanding they are entirely distinct and independent from each other, still the same individual nature of th

one is not the same individual nature of the other, although it be human nature in all. Why therefore might we not allow a degree of unity more to the uncreated and infinitely more noble nature of God? Why should we not be permitted to say that the divine nature is one only, not only in its species, but also in number, and that the same individual nature of the Father, is the same individual nature of the Son, and that the same individual nature of the Father and of the Son, is the same individual nature of the Holy Ghost? We are compelled, by solid and irresistible arguments, to admit a perfect unity and a perfect indivisibility in the divine nature; next, from not less strong and forcible reasons, we see ourselves reduced to assert, that there exists in the divine nature a plurality of persons. We must reconcile one truth with the other. But what combination can be more natural, more congruous, more adapted than this of which we are speaking? If divine nature surpasses and infinitely exceeds human nature, why should not the divine nature exceed at least one degree the unity of human nature? Shall we then deny that one and the same infinite and individual substance may exist in three persons really distinct, and shall we deny it merely because we cannot conceive the *mode* of the mystery. But do we indeed comprehend the mutual commerce of the soul with the body, and so many other mysteries of nature, and still who is there that will deny them, and give the lie to his own experience? Do we understand the great mystery of vision; how a ray penetrates our eye, strikes our retina or optic nerve, and depicts on it, not the image of himself, but of the body by which it is reflected? Do we understand, how our mind sees at once an immense expanse, and distinguishes millions of creatures? Natural philosophy with each succeeding day places before our eyes inexplicable prodigies, and geometry demonstrates truths which are intrinsically incomprehensible.

Reason alone makes us conceive that the power, the understanding, the will, and all other attributes, are the same in God with his Divine Being, and are only one and the same

thing: every one is forced to admit it, and still no one understands it. And if I affirm, on solid and firm foundations, that three persons exist in one and the same nature, shall this be denied, merely because it cannot be understood? Such a procedure would look strange, indeed, and could only proceed from a want of considering, as we have just remarked, that experience forces us to admit, for certain, some truths which reason cannot comprehend, and that, on the contrary, reason makes evidently known to us other truths, which we shall in vain attempt to prove by experience. See our 1st Number.

SECTION VII.

Recapitulation of what has been discussed in this Chapter.

CXIII. Let us awaken our mind from the sweet and profound contemplation of the sublime, the infinite divine nature, in which it has been hitherto absorbed; let us look round and consider how far we have soared above ourselves, and, bending our heads, let us see whence we are come. Amazement and wonder, will cause us to view, with pleasure, the roads which we have travelled over.

In contemplating the divine essence, we have said, that in God there is a natural, intellectual, intrinsic production, which does not divide the essence, although it be communicated to him; in a word: God of God, as light of light.

By the means of this production, we come to discover another similar one, not of the *understanding*, but *of the will*. We have said, that the Father is uncreated, unbegotten, and *of himself;* that the Son originates and comes from the Father, and that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the one and from the other, and that, in fine, this production always lasts, as the Father does not cease to produce and continually to love the Son, and the Son to love the Father; finally, we have said, that all that is created, or shall be created, is and shall be drawn from nothing by the Father, by the Son, and by the Holy Ghost, as by one common principle: we have said—— But what have we said of the infinite and adorable essence of

God, which the Heavens cannot contain,* and in whose presence the whole universe is but a perishable point,† and who at once embraces the past, the present, and the future: Pray, what have we said? Ah! Who shall give us strength to express, at least, those few ideas which we have conceived of it, in order to disengage all men from the trifles and follies of this earth, and to raise them to the only beauty, the only treasure, and the only good: Beauty, treasure, and goodness, the less known, by how much the greater they are? Let, therefore, all creatures join us, and second our inflamed desires. But these—these, for the very reason that they are created beings, tender but a weak and scanty aid. Shall we say to men that thou art the great *All*, that unites in itself all perfections? We shall say that thou art a greatness, which surpasses all greatness; that thou art infinite, immense, uncreated; that thou art power itself, beauty itself, wisdom itself, greatness itself; that thou art all beauty and all goodness, and that, not after the manner we conceive it, but after a manner infinitely and supereminently more perfect, than we are capable of conceiving it? If this is not enough, we shall say that thou art their Maker, their Lord, who drew them out of nothing, and who rules and governs them. We shall say that we are not able either to conceive or to explain, who and how great thou art, because thou art incomprehensible and ineffable. We shall say, with St. Dionysius,‡ that the most worthy kind of worship, we can offer thee, is to bow down before thy infinite Majesty in the most profound and deep silence, and to proclaim by this humble and silent language that thou art He, that is,§ that thou art *All*, and that all the rest is nought in thy presence.

* "For if Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens, cannot contain thee, how much less this house which I have built?" III Reg. 8, 27.

† "Behold, the Gentiles are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the smallest grain of a balance: behold, the Islands are as a little dust—all nations are before him as if they had no being at all, and are counted to him as nothing and vanity." Isaiah, xl. 15, 16.

‡ Lib. de divin nominibus.

§ "God said to Moses: *I am who am.* Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: *He who is*, has sent me to you." Exod. iii. 14.

UNITARIANISM

PHILOSOPHICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY EXAMINED.

NO. V.

SUBJECT CONTINUED.

CHAPTER III.

CXIV. The adorable Mystery of the Blessed Trinity established, 1st. By plain Scriptural evidence. 2dly. By the concurrent and uniform testimonies of the Fathers of both the Greek and Latin church, especially of those that flourished before the general Council of Nice. 3dly. By the authority of Councils and Symbols of Faith. 4thly. By the constant and perpetual practice and belief of the church of Christ.

SECTION I.

The Mystery of the Blessed Trinity established by plain Scriptural Evidence.

CXV. Here we might adduce the plain and unanswerable passages from the sacred writings of the old law, by which divines make it solidly appear, that the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity was revealed to the Patriarchs, Prophets, and to the other Saints of the old dispensation,* and, at least, obscurely insinuated to the people of God;† but as the above discus-

* This is inferred from the following passages, which seem to imply the revelation of the Mystery of the Incarnation. Matt. xiii. v. 17, "Amen I say to you, many prophets and just men have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them." And St. John, viii. chap. v. 56, "Abraham, your Father, rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it, and he was glad."

† Here belong those passages, in which God speaks in the plural number, and, as it were, to another, and seems to hold council with himself, as Genesis

sion has already taken up much of our time, and as this mystery is so clearly set down in the books of the new law, we have thought proper to confine ourselves to a few, but peremptory passages of the sacred writings of the New-Testament, the more so as we shall treat of the divinity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost, in a more special manner, in their proper places.

First Proof, derived from the Baptism of Christ.

CXVI. The history of the baptism, which Christ received in the Jordan, is related in St. Matthew, iii. v. 13, St. Mark, i. v. 10, St. Luke, iii. v. 22. Now, in the said baptism, three distinct persons are manifestly made known to us: Christ, or *the Son* who is baptized; the *Father*, who said: "This is my beloved Son, (ὁ ἀγαπητος,) in whom I am well pleased;" and "the *Holy Ghost*, who descended in a bodily shape as a dove upon him." Luke iii. v. 22.

Second Proof, from the form of Baptism instituted by Christ.

CXVII. In St. Matthew, xxviii. v. 19, Christ addressing his Apostles, said, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Here the three persons are clearly distinguished, as well as the one name, that is to say, the one authority, power, and nature of them. In the *name*, (not in the *names*,) says Christ: in order to designate the unity of nature in the three persons, to whom, when we receive baptism, we enlist our name, and promise our allegiance and worship.

It must be observed, that in baptism three things occur, which only become the true Supreme God; and, as these three

cap. 1, v. 26, "Let us make man to our own image and likeness." And cap. iii. v. 22, "Behold, Adam is become as one of *us*." Cap. 11, v. 7, "Come ye, therefore, let us go down, and there confound their tongues." Next those psalms, in which manifest mention is made of the Father who begets, and the Son who is begotten. Psalm ii. v. 7, "The Lord hath said to me: thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" and psalm cix. v. 1, "The Lord hath said to my Lord: sit thou at my right hand," &c.

things are equally ascribed to the Son and to the Holy Ghost as to the Father, it is undeniable that the Son and the Holy Ghost are one and the same God with the Father. The *first* is the authority of God in instituting baptism, and in confirming with his sacrament as with his seal the covenant which he makes with us. But, to institute a sacrament, belongs to God only; for to the source and author of grace it only belongs infallibly to annex invisible grace to sensible and material signs, as it falls out in sacraments. The *second* is the promise of grace which belongs to him only who can grant the remission of sins, that is to say, to God, who says of himself, "I am, I am He, that blot out thy iniquities for my own sake." Isaiah, xliii. 25. The *third*, in fine, is the stipulation of the worship which is due to God, and to which those that are baptized are bound by the bond of the covenant. Now supreme worship is due to the supreme God only.

But that these three things belong to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as well as to the Father, is thence manifest, because we are baptized without any difference whatever, in the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, as well as in the name of the Father. Other proofs are not wanting, by which it is incontrovertibly demonstrated, that the Son and the Holy Ghost possess one and the same power with the Father of instituting sacraments, of annexing grace to them, and of exacting divine worship from those that consecrate themselves to God by baptism; but we abstain from producing them, lest these sheets should swell to a bulk much beyond our original design.

Third proof, from the Mission of the Holy Ghost.

CXVIII. In St. John, xiv. chap. v. 1, 6. Christ promises to send the Holy Ghost, "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever." And xv. 26, "But when the Paraclete shall come, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me."

Here again we have the three persons clearly pointed out: The *Son*, asking as man, "*I shall ask;*" the *Father*, whom he asks, "*I will ask the Father;*" and the *Holy Ghost*, who is to be sent, "and he shall give you *another Paraclete.*"

Fourth proof, from the 1st Epistle of St. John, 5th chapter, 7th verse.

CXIX. "For there are three that give testimony in Heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one;" that is to say, one substance and one nature.

But as this text is so very decisive, the Unitarian will, no doubt, join with the Socinians, and reply that this passage is, by no means, genuine or authentic, because it is not to be found in several ancient manuscripts; and that, of course, no argument can be drawn from it.

To this we answer, that although the passage under consideration is missing in some manuscripts, it is extant in most of the ancient copies. It exists in the Britannic Manuscript, the authority of which, on account of its antiquity, was so great with Erasmus, who at times spoke but ambiguously of the Divinity of Christ, that in the third and fourth editions which he gave of the New-Testament, he restored the text in its proper place, which in his two former editions he had omitted: The same passage was read in the copies, of which the learned authors of the edition of Alcala made use in the year 1517; in the manuscripts of Laurentius Valla, of Robert Stephanus, and of the Divines of Louvain, who, in the year 1580, after the collocation of a great number of manuscripts, published a new edition of the Bible; it was extant likewise in those Bibles of which the most ancient Fathers of the church made use; for the words alluded to are quoted by St. Cyprian, lib. de Unitate Ecclesiæ, and in his epistles to Jubajanus; by the author of the books on the Trinity, which are commonly ascribed to Vigilius of Tapsa, lib. 1, towards the end, and lib 7; by Victor Vitensis, lib. 2, de persecutione Africana; by St. Fulgentius, lib. de Trinitate, cap. 4. lib. de fide, et lib. 2, contra Arianorum responsiones; by St. Jerom, or whoever is the

author of his prologue to the canonical Epistles, by Eugenius of Carthage towards the end of the fifth century in the year 484, in the profession of faith, which was signed by at least four hundred African Bishops, and presented to Huneric, the Arian king of the Vandals; lastly, the same passage is found in a work, which Cassiodorus, a learned Senator, composed in the fifth and sixth century under the title—*Cassiodori senatoris complexiones in Epistolas et acta Apostolorum*, and which the learned marquis Scipio Maffei rescued from the dust of the Library belonging to the chapter of Verona, and published in the year 1721; where we must remark that Cassiodorus, as appears from the 8th chapter of the *divine Institutions*, spared neither labour nor expense to procure from every quarter sacred manuscripts, which he compared with incredible trouble, with each other, and corrected; and that, in that difficult undertaking, he made use of no other version, than that of the *Vetus Itala*, which before St. Jerom's time was in use; this 7th verse of the Epistle of St. John was, therefore, likewise read in the more ancient copies of the *Italic version*.

But what reason can you assign for so notable an omission in some old manuscripts?

There are several ways of accounting for that omission and among others, it may be said, 1st, that this omission happened by the neglect of some ignorant copyists, who, after having written the first words of the 7th verse "there are three, that give testimony," by a mistake of the eyes, skipped over the remaining part of the text, and passed on to the immediately following text, where the same words recur; for such mistakes often take place in transcribing, especially when the two verses and the two periods begin and end with the same words. Another reason of this omission is given by the author of the prologue to the seven Catholic epistles; for he thus writes of the first epistle of St. John, "We find by the truth of faith, that a great mistake was committed in this epistle by unfaithful translators, in putting down the words of three only in their edition, viz. of the water, the blood, and the spirit, and in omitting the testimony of the Father, and of

the Word and of the Holy Ghost, by which the Catholic faith is much strengthened, and the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are proved to be one and the same substance of the Deity." By these words he not obscurely alludes to the Marcionites or Arians, who designedly erased this verse from all the copies they could get into their hands; for they well understood that by that one testimony their cause was undone. With a like perfidy, St. Ambrose, (lib. iii de spiritu sancto cap. 10.] reproaches the Arians, who had expunged these words from the Scriptures: "Because God is a Spirit," "Which passage, says the holy doctor addressing the Arians, you so well know to be understood of the Holy Ghost, that you have erased it from the copies of your scriptures, and would to God! you had only expunged it from your's and not also from those of the church."

CXX. But Unitarians, forced as they are by the above authorities to admit the genuineness of this palmary text, still expect to come off victorious. Let it be so as you pretend, say they, let the said passage be authentic, still our cause remains untouched; for the unity of which there is question in that seventh verse, is a unity not of essence and nature, but only of will and consent, an unity like unto that which Christ asked for his disciples, in St. John xvii, saying, "that they all may be one as thou art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us;" but Christ assuredly did not ask here a unity of essence and nature with the Father, of which they were incapable, but only a unity of charity and concord, therefore Christ himself had no other unity with the Father than that of charity and concord.

To this we answer that Christ did not ask for his disciples the unity of nature, but the unity of charity and concord, of which only they were capable, and that the particle *as* does not always import a perfect equality, but any similitude or likeness whatsoever, as it is clear from this passage, Matth. v. 48. "Be ye therefore, perfect *as* your Father in heaven is perfect."

CXXI. The Unitarian not yet satisfied, urges further, and pretends that the unity, of which the 7th verse of St. John is speaking, is nothing more than a unity of testimony, like unto that, of which direct mention is made in the 8th verse, "And there are three that give testimony on earth; the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood; and these three are one:" that is to say, one, not in essence, but in testimony; because they equally give testimony of Christ that he is the truth. Therefore, the Father, and the Word, and the Holy Ghost are said to be one, because they conspire in one and the same testimony about Christ.

The answer will be quite easy, if we contrast the two texts with each other. The 8th verse in the Greek text runs thus, "καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσι:" And these three are *into* one. On the contrary, of the Father, of the Word, and of the Holy Ghost, it is said in the 7th verse, "καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς εν εἰσι" and these three are *one*." The true and genuine meaning, therefore, of the 7th and 8th verses is pointed out by the very different wording of the texts, and can be no other than this: there are six that give testimony to Christ that he is the Son of God and the true Messiah: three in Heaven, and three upon earth. In heaven the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three, as to understanding, essence, and testimony are one; three on earth, viz: the water of baptism which washes away sins; the Blood, which was shed in the passion of Christ, and by which the world was redeemed; and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which were so abundantly communicated to the faithful: and these three witnesses are one thing, as to the perfect concord of their testimony.

Sixth proof, from the authority of the Fathers of the Church.

CXXII. There is no tenet in the Christian doctrine, on which the fathers of the church are more explicit and unanimous than the trinity of persons and the unity of nature in God.

In the first age of the church this mystery is clearly taught by St. Clement of Rome in his epistle to the Corinthians.

In the second age by St. Justin in his second apology for the Christians, by St. Polycarp, disciple of St. John the Evangelist, in the prayer which he addressed to God before his martyrdom, by Athenagoras in his legation for the Christians.

In the third age by St. Irenæus every where in his books against heresies; by Tertullian in his book against Praxeas; by St. Gregory Thaumaturgus in his profession of faith; by St. Dionysius of Alexandria in his epistle against Paul of Samosata; by St. Dionysius, Pontiff of Rome, in his epistle against the Sabellians, which St. Athanasius relates in his book on the decrees of the Council of Nice. And these fathers, without controversy, flourished before the Council of Nice.

After the time of the Council of Nice, in the very great number of fathers, we scarce are able to meet with one, that has not professed his faith on the present mystery in an ample and unequivocal manner. St. Athanasius in his books on the synods and on the decrees of the Council of Nice, in his oration against the Arians, &c. St. Hilary in his books on the Trinity, on the Psalms, on St. Matthew, &c. St. Basil in his book on the Holy Ghost, in his work against Eunomius, in his book against the Sabellians, the Arians, the Anomæans. St. Gregory Nazanzien in his oration against the Eunomians.—St. Gregory Nyssen in the books on the Mystery of the Trinity. St. Ambrose, in his book on the Holy Ghost, and in another on faith. St. Augustin in his books on the Trinity, and against Maximinus, &c. St. Cyril of Alexandria in his works against Julian the apostate, &c.

We have omitted, to avoid too great prolixitiy, quoting the very words of the Holy Fathers, but if the least doubt were entertained about the correctness of our quotations, their passages shall be given at full length.

Seventh proof, from the authority of the Councils and Synods of the Church.

CXXIII. St. Dionysius of Alexandria, in a Synod held at Alexandria, about the middle of the third century, the first

council of Antioch, held in the year 264 under the Holy Pontiff Dionysius, and the second celebrated in the year 279, proscribed the impious doctrine of Paul of Samosata, and the Œcumenic council of Nice in the year 325, condemned the blasphemy of Arius by these words of the symbol, "We believe in one God the Father Almighty, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son, born of the Father before all ages, begotten, not made, consubstantial to the Father, and in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and lifegiver."*

This doctrine of the general council of Nice was approved of and confirmed in the famous council of Sardis in the year 347, in the first general council of Constantinople in the year 381, and by other general councils; in fine, in the symbol which goes under the name of St. Athanasius, although it is generally agreed among the learned, that this father was not the author of it, but which still is of the greatest authority because of its high antiquity, the faith of the church is thus announced, "The catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance, for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost, but the Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal."†

Respecting the above symbols of the general councils of Nice, of Constantinople, and that which bears the name of St. Athanasius, I have only to observe, that from the time

* "Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἕνα θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, πάντων ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀοράτων ποιητήν, καὶ εἰς ἕνα Κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ γεννηθέντα, ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μονογενῆ, τουτέστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ, φῶς ἐκ φωτὸς, θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο, τά τε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γῇ . . . καὶ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον." Symbol Nicæn. Socrates lib. 1. Hist. Ecclesiast. cap. 8. Vide Collect. Council. Labbe et Harduin.

† Fides Catholica hæc est, ut unum Deum in Trinitate, et Trinitatem in unitate veneremur, neque confundentes personas, neque substantiam separantes; alia est enim Persona Patris, alia Filii, alia Spiritus Sancti; sed Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti una est Divinitas, æqualis gloria, coæterna Majestas.

they were edited, they made a part of the public divine worship through the whole Christian world, hence the reader may easily infer, what was the public and solemn belief of the church of Christ for the space of at least 1500 years, and the man, with whom the authority of the whole Christian world, for such a lapse of ages, has less weight than the "*ipse dixit*" of a few individuals of the eighteenth century, must be destitute not only of religion, but even of plain common sense.

Eighth proof from the constant and perpetual Tradition of the Church.

CXXIV. This tradition appears *first* from the incontestable fact, that those who denied the trinity of persons, the divinity of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost, or the unity of the divine nature, were, in all past ages, held by the church of God for heretics: so when Praxeas, towards the end of the second century, came to Rome under Pope Zephirinus, and publicly taught that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost were but one and the same person under three different names, he was compelled to abjure this his impious novelty, as Tertullian relates in his book against Praxeas, first chapter. So the whole church in the second and following ages, rose up against Ebion, Artemon, Paul of Samosata, as we learn from Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria to Alexander, Bishop of Constantinople, as is related by Theodoret.*

The church, therefore, had also professed the same doctrine in the preceding ages, as we may gather from the manner in which the fathers of the council of Antioch speak, "We have resolved to publish in writing, and to explain the faith, which we have received from the beginning, and which we

* Οι πασης της αποστολικης ευσεβους δοξης κατηγορουντες &c.—— Την θεοτητα τε σωτηρος ημων αρνεμενοι, και τοις πασιν ισον ειναι κηρυσσοντες" "Men who contradict the holy apostolical doctrine by denying our Saviour's Godhead, and preaching that he is equal to other men." Theodoret lib. 1. cap. 4.

have derived from the holy Apostles by tradition, and preserved in the Catholic church down to this present day."*

CXXV. *Secondly*, Baptism was always administered in the name and by the express invocation of the most holy Trinity ; which fact is a public and solemn profession of faith in the three divine persons, and in the unity of their nature. With a view of professing her faith in the three divine persons, the church, for a considerable length of time, made use of a threefold immersion in the administration of baptism.

CXXVI. *Thirdly, and lastly*, the public worship of adoration or *Latria*, was at all times, and all over the world, paid by christians to God the Father, to God the Son, and to God the Holy Ghost, as we learn from St. Justin in his Apology for the Christians. "Since we are taught that Jesus Christ crucified under Pontius Pilate the President in Judea, in the time of Tiberius Cæsar, is the Son of the true God, and since we hold him in the second place, and the prophetic Spirit in the third, we can demonstrate that they are worshiped by us with reason."† Athenagoras in his legation for the Christians likewise says: "We declare the Holy Ghost himself, who inspires the prophets, to be an emanation of God, that he is emitted and reflected like a ray of the sun. Who then should not be surprised to hear those called Atheists who believe God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and who show their power in their unity and their distinction in their order."‡ The same constant and in-

* "Decrevimus fidem scripto edere et exponere, quam a principio accepimus, ac hæbemus traditam ac servatam in catholica Eulesia usque in hodiernum diem a Beatis Apostolis."

† Justin Apolog. 1. Ιησυν Χριστον τον σταυρωθεντα επι Ποντιυ Πιλατυ τυ γενομενυ εν Ιυδαια επι χρονοις Τιβεριυ Καισαρος επιτροπυν, υιον τυ οντος θευ μαθοντος, και εν δευτερα χωρα εχοντος, πνευμα τε προφητικον εν τριτη ταξει, οτι μετα λογυ τιμωμεν, αποδειξομεν.

‡ Athenag. Legat.——και τοι καυτο το ενεργουν τοις εκφωνουσι προφητικως αγιον πνευμα, απορροιαν ειναι φαμεν του θεου, απορρεον και επαναφερομενον, ως ακτινα ηλιου. Τις ουν ουκ αν απορησαι, λεγοντας θεον πατερα και υιον θεου και πνευμα αγιον, δεικνυντας αυτων και την εν τη ενωσει δυναμιν, και την εν τη ταξει διαιρεσιν, ακουσας αθεους καλουμενους.

variable belief of the church is irresistibly evinced from the immemorial use of the well known Trisagion: *Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy immortal, have mercy on us,* and the Doxology *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was,* &c. which, from the earliest ages of the church began to be used as parts of public worship. (See more on this below.)

CXXVII. I do not see what can be possibly objected on the part of the Unitarians against the uniform and constant testimony of the whole Christian world in support of the mystery of the adorable Trinity, except we be again told, that the whole church of God, spread over the universal world was involved in a most damnable error, in downright idolatry, and that *their* bold assertions, *their* superior reason ought to have more weight with us than the reason, the wisdom, the learning, and the sanctity of all the preceding ages, of the Apostolical Fathers, of myriads of Martrys that died for that faith, of Holy Pontiffs, and of venerable Councils, in which the whole church was assembled. And if so, I ask, where then, was the church of Christ even in the Apostolical ages? For we have proved, and shall still more amply show, from the writings of the apostolical Fathers, that the church in its very beginning adored and worshipped the Son and the Holy Ghost as one and the same God with the Father. Where was the church of Christ for these eighteen hundred years? For we have demonstrated on the one side, that the christian world has at all times, solemnly professed both by faith and practice, the ineffable mystery of the Trinity, and on the other it is self-evident, that an idolatrous church, that adores as true God two persons, who, if we credit the Unitarians, are not God, cannot be the true church of God. But what is still more, what must we think of God himself, who, by sending his only-begotten Son into the world would seem to have had no other design than to involve the world in the worst of idolatries? What must we think of the Son, who, in the solemn commission he gives to his Apostles of teaching all nations, so clearly distinguishes the Trinity of persons and the unity

of nature, saying, "*Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?*" What must we think of the Apostles, and the first generation of the church, which was immediately instructed by them, and from whose mouth they must have received this fundamental dogma? In short, what must we think of religion at large, if God, if Christ, if his Apostles have so egregiously imposed upon the world? and will it not follow, by an immediate and necessary consequence, that Christianity is nothing more than a fable, and that it will be the part of wisdom to launch out into an universal religious, or better to say, irreligious skepticism?

Moreover, if these unheard-of pretensions of the Unitarians should happen to find admittance in the world, and if they are to be listened to, when they modestly tell us that the whole christian world, for a space of not less than eighteen hundred years, has been grossly mistaken; and next that they are the only true and first illuminati, and that their opinion, without further ado, is more to be esteemed, than the joint and uniform evidence of all christendom; we shall, in that case, have to invent a new logic, and a strange one, too, it must be; and, beginning with tearing down what philosophy has hitherto revered as the first principles and foundations of all knowledge and truth, establish new ones as opposite to them as they are to good sense: accordingly, we must begin to teach, that the evidence of men, even supposing it to be in the highest degree, and whatever be their number, their probity, and the duration of their testimony, has ceased all at once to be an infallible criterion of truth, that it proves no longer any thing; we must maintain that, to give the lie to the whole world or to deny a public, solemn and interesting fact attested by millions, who new sealed the veracity of their deposition with their own blood, nothing more will be required, than that some unblushing writers, who live at a distance of eighteen hundred years from the time, when the fact under consideration is supposed to have taken place, should step forward and boldly say—the whole world was deceived respecting this fact; the fact is false; ask no further reason; it ought to be

reason enough for you, that I tell you so. I say, that, if this Unitarian logic be correct, one single ordinary witness, without any particular advantage, will have it in his power to enervate and invalidate the testimony of millions. For I do not suppose that the present Unitarian church, if church it can be called, will pretend to bear a higher ratio to the whole christian world, than one bears to a million. Now, unless all mankind turn at once antipodes to good common sense, I have my doubts, whether such a logic, recommended as much as you please, by the importance of the Unitarian "αυτος εφα," will ever gain respect in the world. We shall return hereafter to this subject.

Unitarian Objections Answered.

CXXIX. "Unitarians believe one of the great doctrines taught in the Scriptures, to be the unity and supremacy of God, and as there is but one God, so the Scripture teaches, that he alone is to be worshipped."*

So likewise believe christians, and this is a truth to which not reason only, but Scripture also, throughout, bears witness in these passages, in which the Lord our God is said to be *one Lord, one God*, &c. Deuteron. vi. 4. Cor. xv. 4. 6. &c.

But who has ever told the Unitarians, that the three divine Persons are more than one God? When, therefore, in the above passages God is said to be only one God and one Lord, the Scripture means only to exclude such as are not true God, that is to say, the false divinities of paganism, but by no means the divine persons of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, who with the Father are one and the same true living God, as having but one and the same indivisible divine nature.

But, replies the Unitarian, how can there be three distinct persons, without there being three Gods?

I answer, because the three divine persons have all one and the same numerical and indivisible nature, which is neither multiplied, nor divided; and because there is in the Deity one

* Unitarian Miscellany, &c. No. 1. vol. 1. p. 12.

only Principle or fountain of the whole Godhead, viz. the Father, who on that account is said to be of himself, because he proceedeth from none, and from him both the Son and the Holy Ghost proceed, the former by way of the understanding, and the latter by way of the will, but so proceed, that they remain in him, according to the words of Christ, St. John x. 38. "The Father is in me, and I in the Father." And it is for this reason, too, that Jesus Christ directs us chiefly to pray to his Father, and not to himself or to the Holy Ghost, and that he himself as man prayed to the Father only; not as if he and the Holy Ghost were not one and the same God with the Father; but because the eternal Father being the principle and the fountain head of the Deity, in as far as he proceedeth from none, and both the Son and the Holy Ghost proceed from him, it was quite natural that Christ himself, during his mortal condition, should pray to the Father, and should likewise direct us to pray to him as to his principle, from whom he cometh forth from all eternity. But by praying to the Father, we pray at the same time to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as being *one* with the Father in nature and substance; and for this reason, we may address our prayers indifferently to the Father, or to the Son, or to the Holy Ghost, as the Christians of all ages have ever done.

CXXX. "From this short abstract may be seen, says the writer of the Miscellany, the opinions of Unitarians, as they differ from many other Christians, on the subject of the Trinity."*

He ought to have said, from *all Christians without exception*, as there can be no Christian without baptism, nor baptism without the explicit belief of the blessed Trinity, according to the express words of Christ, "Go ye, therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matth. xxvii. 19. and, "unless a man be reborn out of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven." John iii. 5.

* Unitarian Miscellany, No. 1. vol. 1. p. 18.

The above writer continues, " What the most prevalent opinions are, at the present day, respecting the doctrine of the Trinity, is not easy to ascertain. There are almost as many theories and modes of explanation, as there have been writers on the subject. This circumstance itself would lead almost any thinking man to suspect its soundness. A fundamental doctrine of revealed religion, it would be supposed, ought to be one, to which Christans can fix some definite character, and in which they can unite in some consistent explanation. But, unhappily, no doctrine has so completely eluded the attempts of its advocates, to define and explain, upon any intelligible principles, as that of the Trinity."

Is it ignorance, or is it malice, or is it both, that has dictated this article to the Unitarian writer? From it the reader must naturally infer, that there never was any thing more fluctuating and uncertain than the opinions of Christians respecting the doctrine of the Trinity; and is this, I ask the Unitarians, or has this ever been a fact? Is it true, that " it is not easy to ascertain their opinions respecting this mystery, that there are as many modes or theories of explanation as there have been writers on the subject, that no definite character can be affixed to it?"&c. Is the Unitarian really sincere in what he thus confidently holds out to the public? or are these insinuations only thrown out, because he knows that, agreeably to the well known motto of the European sophisters, *Semper aliquid hærit*, something unfavourable to the doctrine of the Trinity will remain impressed on the public mind? Let us now examine the correctness of this statement.

CXXXI. I defy the Unitarian writer to mention one single Christian nation that has not, or does not, at present, believe the mystery of the Blessed Trinity in the same definite sense and meaning, in which it is, at the present day, believed by all that bear the name of Christians, viz. one only God in three distinct persons, and three distinct persons in one only God, or, what is tantamount, in one only divine and indivisible nature?

" Christians, it is said, cannot fix any definite character to this doctrine."

Why? has not Christ himself, clearly fixed it in the passage so often quoted, "Baptizing them in the *name* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?" Is not here the distinction of the three Persons clearly pointed out, together with the unity of nature by the phrase "*in the name?*" Has not the disciple of love fixed the definite character of the mystery, 1 Epistle v. 7. "There are *three* that give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these *three* are *one?*" Is not *Trinity* and *unity* here clearly expressed? Did not the primitive Fathers, St. Clement of Rome, St. Justin cited above, &c. Did not the councils held against Sabellius, Paul of Samosata, the general council of Nice against the Arians, and the first general council of Constantinople against the Macedonians, clearly define it? If there exists any difference of opinion or theory among the Christian writers respecting certain questions relative to this mystery as well as to other revealed truths, these opinions are merely scholastic, and have nothing to do with divine faith; for these writers disagreeing as they do about school questions, on which every one has a right to "abound in his own sense," believe and profess most inviolably, in unison with all christendom, the revealed truths of faith, for instance: *That there is only one God in three distinct Persons.* As to those writers, who, after having thrown off all regard for authority and ecclesiastical antiquity, and who, looking down with a supercilious look upon the whole Christian world, and the accumulated authority of eighteen hundred years, sit down independent and exclusive judges, to arraign the most high and incomprehensible God at the bar of their reason, and to reject of his revelations whatever soars above its sphere; with writers of this description we have nothing to do.

"But unhappily, (so finishes the above article,) no doctrine has so completely eluded the attempts of its advocates, to define and explain, upon any intelligible principles, as that of the Trinity."

CXXXII. The advocates of the blessed Trinity as well as

of any other revealed mystery define and explain them on the most intelligible principles, upon principles sanctioned by logic and sound reason, upon principles grounded on the very first notions, which all men have of the Deity; that is to say, on the most certain and undeniable extrinsic evidence that God has revealed them; and surely reason and sound logic dictate that, when it is incontrovertibly certain that God has spoken, it is the first and essential duty of man to bow down and to believe, although he cannot understand the intrinsic nature of what God reveals, because reason and sound logic teach man, that an infinite intellect understands and comprehends more than the limited intellect of man is capable of understanding, and that a God of infinite veracity can neither deceive nor be deceived in his communications to men. The same plain good sense, makes us conceive that it is folly and intolerable rashness for a child, (as man is with regard to God,) to pretend to be able to contain in the hollow of his hands all the waters of the ocean, or for a lamp to contain as much light as is contained in the bright luminary of the day.

CXXXIII. "When we have enquired how it is possible, that there should be two other beings, equal in substance, power, and eternity with the Father, and not make together with him three Gods, we have never received an answer any more satisfactory than the proposition itself."

We have given an answer to this *sophism** which will fully satisfy any one, that does not impiously pretend to put himself on a level with his God, and to comprehend as much as an infinite wisdom comprehends. I call it *sophism*: for there never was a Christian so silly as to pretend, that there are in God two other equal *beings* with the Father; for as on the one side *being* in its direct and native signification imports nature or substance, and as on the other there cannot exist but one indivisible nature or substance in God, it is manifest that there cannot be said to be in God three distinct equal beings, but well three distinct and equal persons, who make but one and the same divine being, because they sub-

* No. 1. sect. 3. and No. 4. sect. 4.

sist in one and the same divine nature or substance. We shall have occasion to explain this matter more fully in the sequel of this work.

" When we have asked for Scripture proof, we have been referred to texts, whose language bears no resemblance to that, in which the doctrine is stated, and which oftentimes have very little, if any relation to the subject."

" As a last resort, we are conducted to the hidden places of mystery and gravely told, that this profound doctrine was never intended to be fathomed by human powers, and that we must be cautious lest a vain curiosity betray us into presumptuous inquiries."

CXXXIV. Is it we who give the Unitarians this salutary advice, or is it not rather the Holy Ghost ? " Seek not the things that are too high for thee, and search not into things above thy ability—and in many of his works be not curious. For it is not necessary for thee to see with thy eyes those things that are hid; in unnecessary matters be not over curious, and in many of his works thou shalt not be inquisitive. For many things are showed to thee above the understanding of men." Eccles. iii. 22, 23, 24.—And does not St. Paul, too, lead them to the hidden places of mystery when he exclaims, " O, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? Or who hath been his counsellor ?" Rom. xi. 33, 34. And when Christ himself says, " He that shall *believe* and be baptized, shall be saved." Mark xvi. 16. Does he invite them to *fathom*, and not rather to believe his doctrine upon his divine authority ? What does also St. Paul mean, when he speaks of " bringing into captivity every understanding to the obedience of Christ ?" 2 Corinth. x. 5.

" This, to be sure, in the language of Solomon, is " the end of the whole matter." For nothing is more idle than to reason with a man, who tells you, he has given up the use of his reason."*

* Christian Miscellany, No. 1. Vol. 1.

CXXXV. This, to be sure, that is to say, the divine authority ought to be "the end of the whole matter" for any sober mind, without requesting any other reason, in order to believe. For nothing can be more rash or impious, than for man to reason with a God, who tells him to give up, not the *use*, but the *pride* of his reason, to his unerring authority: man does not give up his reason, but makes the noblest use of it, when he submits to the oracles of an infinite wisdom. Mysteries like the pillar that marched before the children of Israel, have their dark and obscure side: they are dark, obscure, and impervious to the eye of reason, with regard to their *intrinsic nature*, but they have likewise a most bright and luminous side; which consists in an abundance of extrinsic and irresistible evidence, that God has actually revealed them, and that, of course, although incomprehensible in themselves, they are most undoubtedly true. When on sea, you from afar see a light in the dark, although you do not see the light-house nor any object around it, still without the least hesitation you steer your course towards the light, because by the light you are sure that the light-house is there, although you do not see it; and in this, you assuredly act wisely. It is thus Christians act, in believing mysteries, although they do not comprehend them: we cannot see them, we can perceive their intrinsic nature as little as the seaman can discern the light-house, but the light of extrinsic evidence, and of irrefragable proofs, by which they come recommended to us, render us most certain that they unquestionably exist, although their intrinsic nature be hidden from us. This idea is borrowed from the second epistle of St Peter, i. 19th verse. "And we have the word of prophecy more firm: to which you do well to attend, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns." So we do not see the mysteries, but we clearly see the light, or the reasons why we are to believe them.

CXXXVI. "But the Unitarian doctrines are rational and Scriptural."

We have proved them to be as discordant to reason as to Scripture.

"They can be defined and explained"—

But not upon Christian principles.

"They involve no contradictions."

We have proved, and shall still further prove the contrary.

"They never take refuge in mysteries"—

No, because with an unhallowed hand they expunge them all, but they take refuge in those antichristian sophisms and fallacious argumentation, by which the sworn enemies of Christianity, the Celsuses, the Porphyriuses, the Julians meant to shake the very foundations of revelation, and by which they impose on the simple and unsuspecting reader.

"They have no delight in darkness."*

Except when too much light would be premature for a public as yet too Christianly disposed and thus eventually injure their cause. And do Christians delight in darkness? Was not their religion with all its mysteries publicly and solemnly preached on the very house-tops, on the very highways, in all nations, and all over the globe? Do the Christians ever shrink from inspection, or retire from any manly and honourable contest to vindicate their doctrines, or substantiate their authority?

CXXXVII. By way of conclusion we shall annex here such extracts of the three principal symbols or professions of faith of the Christian church, as have a more immediate relation to the subject we have hitherto treated of, viz. the mystery of the blessed Trinity: This appendix will be the more gratifying to our Christian readers, as by the bare inspection of it, they will at once see to their great comfort, how uniform, constant, and invariable the belief of the Christian world was, respecting the mystery of the Trinity, from the very commencement of the church. For nothing can better attest the faith of the church of God than these creeds, which from the time they were made, formed a part of the public divine worship, and were exacted from those that wished to receive Baptism.

* Christian Miscellany, No. 1. Vol. 1.

First Symbol,

Called the Symbol of the Apostles.

CXXXVIII. "I believe in God the Father Almighty," &c.*

Second Symbol,

Called the Nicene creed.

CXXXIX. This creed of the Œcumenic Council of Nice, held in the year 325 against the Arians, is related by St. Athanasius in Tract. de fide ad Jovianum Augustum, by Rufinus, Socrates, Theodoretus, &c. and with the addition made to it by the Fathers of the second Council of Constantinople, in the year 381 against the impugners of the Holy Ghost, is as follows.

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. And in our Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, and born of the Father, before all ages, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial to the Father, by whom all things were made: who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. Was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven; sits at the right hand of the Father; and is to come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end. And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord

* It is an undeniable fact, attested by all antiquity, that this Symbol, after whatever manner it was originally composed, was in universal use from the Apostolical age, and that it was demanded of the catechumens when they presented themselves for baptism, as a test of their faith, and as a distinctive sign from other heterodox societies. Now this Symbol contains manifestly a solemn profession of the mystery of the Trinity, it being divided into three principal parts, the first of which treats of the eternal Father, and the works of the creation, the second of Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord, and of the works of the incarnation and redemption, and the last of the Holy Ghost and the works of sanctification and glorification.

and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, and the Son, who together with the Father and Son is adored and glorified: who spoke by the prophets. And one, holy, catholic, and Apostolical church. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

Third Symbol,

*Which bears the name of St. Athanasius.**

CXL. "The Catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity.

Neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance.

For one is the person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Ghost.

But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, such is the Holy Ghost.

The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, the Holy Ghost uncreated.

The Father immense, the Son immense, the Holy Ghost immense.

The Father eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Ghost eternal.

And yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal.

As also they are not three uncreated, nor three immense; but one uncreated and one immense. In like manner the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, the Holy Ghost Almighty.

* It is agreed among the learned that St. Athanasius is not the author of the Symbol under consideration, and that it was composed about the end of the fifth century: It, however, was found so to concord with the received doctrine of the christian world, that it was immediately sanctioned by the church, and inserted into her public office.

And yet there are not three Almighties, but one Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God.

And yet there are not three Gods, but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Ghost is Lord.

And yet there are not three Lords but one Lord.

For as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge every person particularly to be God and Lord.

So we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say there are three Gods or three Lords.

The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.

The Son is from the Father alone, not made, not created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son, not made, not created, not begotten, but proceeding.

There is therefore one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

And in this Trinity nothing is prior or posterior, nothing is greater or lesser; but the whole three persons are co-eternal to one another; and co-equal.

So that in all things, as has been said above, the unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in unity, is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.

But it is necessary to everlasting salvation, that he also believe firmly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The right faith therefore is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and man.

He is God of the substance of his Father, begotten before ages; and he is man of the substance of his mother, born in the world.

Perfect God and perfect man; of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting.

Equal to the Father, according to his Godhead, lesser than the Father, according to his manhood.

Who although he be God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ.

One not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the assuming the manhood into God.

One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.

CXLIII. Thus we shall continue to sing with the church of God the well known Trisagion, "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of Hosts: All the earth is full of his glory," and thus represent by our worship upon earth an image of what is done by the heavenly spirits in the mansions of glory, which, as we learn from the prophet Isaiah, cap. vi. v. 3. and St. John's Apocal. cap. iv. v. 8. are incessantly resounding with this sublime canticle, which, as St. Ambrose informs us—de spiritu sancto, lib. 3. cap. 12. is re-echoed in the east and in the west to honour the unity and Trinity in God.—We shall add likewise that other formula of praise, which the Christian world has now used in her divine worship nearly these fourteen hundred years. "Αγιος ο Θεος, Αγιος Ισχυρος, Αγιος αθανατος ελεησον ημας." "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us."*

All that can be further objected by the Unitarians against the mystery of the Trinity, has been victoriously answered, as early as the second and third century, by those Fathers that

* St. John Damascene, Cedrenus, Balsamon, Pope Felix III. Nicephorus and others inform us, that this formula was first introduced by St. Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople, in the year 446, under the reign of Theodosius the younger, on the occasion of a horrible earthquake that happened there. They add that the people sang this new Trisagion with the more fervour that they attributed this calamity to the blasphemies, which the innovators of that city did not cease to vomit against the Son of God, and that when this canticle was begun upon the spot, the scourge ceased. The council of Chalcedon, held in the year 451, adopted it, and since that time it has always been of daily use in the Greek church, but the Latin church sings it but once a year, on Good Friday, immediately before the adoration of the cross, and repeats it thrice in Greek and in Latin. St. John Damascene tells us that the orthodox made use of it to express their faith respecting the holy Trinity, that the words "Holy God," designate the Father, "God Mighty" the Son, and "God immortal" the Holy Ghost.

wrote against Sabellius, Paul of Samosata and the Arians. Proper attention shall be paid to some anti-christian sophisms when we shall treat of the divinity of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, to whom, with the Father, be honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

There are few divines in latter times that have commented on the adorable mystery of the Trinity more sublimely and devoutly than the learned and pious bishop of Meaux has done; the writer of these sheets, therefore, thought the following extract from his works would not prove unacceptable to his readers.

LXX DAY.

God, Father and Son. St. John, xvii. 3. 5. 10. 21. 25.

CXLIV. "It is not possible to dismiss this divine prayer of our Saviour, nor the speech, which precedes it, and which, as we have seen, has furnished the matter for it. One reads over and over again this discourse, this last farewell, this prayer of Jesus Christ, and, as it were, his last wishes, always with a new relish, and with a new consolation. All the secrets of heaven are revealed in it, and that, after the most insinuating and affecting manner possible.

Which is the grand secret of heaven, unless it be that eternal and impenetrable communication between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? That is, I say, the secret of heaven, which renders happy those that see it, and which had not been as yet perfectly revealed: But Jesus Christ reveals it to us here in an admirable manner.

Who says a Father, says a Son; and who says a Son, says an equal in nature; and who says an equal in a nature as perfect as that of God is, says an equal in all perfection: insomuch that there cannot be a first and second but through a holy, perfect, and eternal origin.

This is what Jesus Christ gives us to understand, when he asks of his Father the clear manifestation of the glory which he had in him,* *Apud te:* with thee and in thy bosom before the world was made.† That glory, which he had in

* John, i. 1. † Ibid. xvii. 5.

the bosom of God, could not but be the glory of God himself: which, and the glory of the Son too, being always, and preceding all that has been made, was not, of course, made itself. It is, consequently, uncreated as that of the Father. This is so, and cannot be otherwise.

The Son equal to his Father, and still at the same time his envoy, because "he cometh from him."* He came forth from him, to come into the world, this is how he was sent. He quits the world, to return to the Father, behold the term of his mission: This is all that Jesus Christ is in his Person, perfectly equal to God who sends him, because he is his own Son; God would not have a Son who would be less than himself, or who would not be worth himself. Pardon, Oh Lord! these expressions; they who speak, are men. When we say, that God would not, this is to say, that it would be unworthy of God, and that, of course, it cannot be. It is on this account, that in every thing and every where he treats as equal with his Father. "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine."† This bespeaks a perfect equality, and on both sides. It is more than if he had said that he is his equal: for it is more to treat as equal with him, than to enounce simply that equality.

But let us see what Jesus Christ is with regard to us. He is, like his Father, our happiness: "to know his Father and him, is for us everlasting life." Hence he says, "He that loveth me, shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him." This is the great effect of my love: It is thereby I render men eternally happy. And he adds, "if any one love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make an abode with him."§

"We will come," in company, my Father and I. Who could ever thus equalize himself to God? "We will come:" for we cannot come one without the other: "we will come:" for it is not all to have the Father; I must be had too: "we

* John, xvi. 28.—xvii. 8. † Ibid. xvii. 10. ‡ Ibid. xvii. 3.—xiv. 21. § Ibid. xiv. 23.

will come;" Who can come into man, in order to replenish and sanctify him inwardly but God himself? "We will come to them and make an abode with them." They will be our common temple, our common sanctuary: We will be their common sanctification, their common felicity, their common life. What can he say more explicit, to put himself on equality with his Father? The best way to say it, is to show it by effects. Oh man, what do you long for? To have God within you. And in order that you may have him fully, my Father and I will come into your interior: If you desire to have me within yourselves, by wishing to have God within you, I am then God.

It is thus the faithful shall be one; because they will all have within themselves the Father and the Son, and will be their temple: "*They will be one*," says Jesus Christ, but they will be "*one in us*."* We shall be the common band of their unity: because my Father and I being perfectly one, all unity must come from us; and we are the bond of it as well as the principle.

This is the first part of the divine secret: The perfect unity of the Father and of the Son, at present perfectly revealed to men: in order to give them to understand, how sincere and perfect their union ought proportionably to be: since it has for its model and bond the unity absolutely perfect of the Father and of the Son, and their eternal and unalterable peace." B. Bossuet, vol. x.p. 295, last ed.

CHAPTER IV.

On the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, against the Arians, Macedonians, Socinians, now known under the name of Unitarians.

SECTION I.

The Holy Ghost is true God, and, therefore, consubstantial with the Father and with the Son.

CXLV. This dogmatical conclusion is proved *first* from the authority of the divine Scriptures. Christ, Matth. ult.

* John xvii. 21.

says, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here in the form of baptism prescribed by Jesus Christ, we find the Holy Ghost joined to God the Father, and to God the Son, therefore he is true God, one and the same God with the Father, and the Son; for if he were not, no reason can be imagined why he should be associated with the Father and the Son in honour and dignity, neither can it be conceived, why he should be named in baptism, the sacrament of faith, unless he be the object of our faith, to be which cannot belong to a creature; therefore, the Holy Ghost is true God, &c.*

CXLVI. In the Acts of the Apostles,* which St. Chrysostom, by way of excellence, styles "Librum dogmatum de Spiritu Sancto," the book which contains the dogmas of the Holy Ghost; and Œcumenius, another Greek Father, "Ευαγγελιον τȣ̃ πνευματος Αγιȣ̃," "the Gospel of the Holy Ghost;" St. Peter thus addresses Ananias: "Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy heart, that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost, and by fraud keep part of the price of the field? Thou hast not lied to men but to God." Here the Holy Ghost is clearly and absolutely called God, and contradistinguished from creatures. "Thou hast lied not to *men* but to *God*." I am sensible, that, as there is no tenet so clear, which the Unitarian critic will not endeavour to distort from its plain, obvious, and natural meaning to his favourite system, the present passage will have to suffer the accustomed violence; but I am confident, too, that the sober reader will look down with pity and indifference on the distorted and arbitrary interpretations of a few new teachers, when they come to see, that the great luminaries of both the Greek and Latin church perfectly agree in understanding this text of the divinity of the Holy Ghost. This passage is urged against the Macedonians by St. Basil, lib. v. against Eunomius, and in his book on the Holy Ghost, chap. xvi.—by St. Gregory Nazianzen in his thirty-seventh oration—by St. Cyril of Alexandria, in

* Acts, chap. viii.

Thesau. thirty-fourth assertion—by St. Ambrose, book i. chap. iv. on the Holy Ghost—by St. Epiphanius, seventy-fourth Heres.—by St. Augustin, lib. iii. chap. 21. against Maximinus, &c.

CXLVII. In the same Acts, chap. xix. St. Paul found certain disciples at Ephesus, and he said to them: "Have you received the *Holy Ghost*, since ye believed? But they said to him, We have not so much as heard whether there be a *Holy Ghost*. And he said: in what then are you baptized? Who said: in John's baptism. Then Paul said: John baptized the people with the baptism of penance &c. Having heard these things, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." That is to say, with the baptism instituted by Jesus Christ, and the form of which he himself has prescribed in these words, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Who does not see, that St. Paul and the disciples of Ephesus meant to speak here of the Holy Ghost as of a *person* and as of a *divine* person, too, as without whose faith and baptism they could not be true Christians?

CXLVIII. What is said to have been spoken by the *Lord the God of Hosts*, Isaiah, vi. "Hearing, hear, and understand not" is said by St. Paul in the Acts, xxviii. chap. to have been pronounced by the Holy Ghost, "well did the Holy Ghost speak to our Fathers by Isaias the prophet: With the ear you shall hear and shall not understand," &c. Therefore the Lord of Hosts, and the Holy Ghost are the same, and of course the Holy Ghost is true God as to nature and substance; for he that is called Jehovah and the Lord of Hosts in the old law, is called the Holy Ghost in the new, but he that is called Jehovah and the Lord of Hosts in the Old Testament, is true God as to nature and substance, therefore, the Holy Ghost is true God as to nature and substance.

CXLIX. He is true God, to whom the divine attributes and such works are ascribed, which God only can perform. But the divine attributes and divine operations are attributed to the Holy Ghost: this minor proposition is proved from the

Book of Wisdom, i. v. 7. where immensity is predicated of the Holy Ghost ; " The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole world." From I. Corinthians, c. 2. where omniscience is affirmed of him ; " For the Spirit of God searcheth all things, *even the profound things of God*," where *search* is the same as *comprehend*, since God is said, in the seventh Psalm, v. 10. to be—" The searcher of hearts and reins." Omnipotence is likewise his attribute, Psalm, xxxii. " By the word of the Lord, the heavens were established, and all the power of them by *the Spirit of his mouth*." Sanctification and justification are his works, I Corinth. vi. 11. " But you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."—The working of miracles and tongues is likewise ascribed to the Holy Ghost, I. Corinth. xii.—" But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man unto profit. To one indeed, by the Spirit, is given the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: to another faith in the same Spirit: to another the grace of healing in one Spirit: to another the working of miracles ; to another, prophecy ; to another, the discerning of spirits ; to another, divers kinds of tongues ; to another, interpretation of speeches. But all these things one and the same spirit worketh, dividing to every one, according as he will." Therefore, the Holy Ghost is true God and a true subsisting person, as to whom the distribution of heavenly gifts and other such like divine operations are ascribed, which belong only to persons.

Second proof, from the Greek and Latin Fathers.

CL. St. Irenæus, in his fourth book against heresies chap. v. says, " that man was made by the hand of the Father, that is to say, by the Son and the Holy Ghost according to the likeness of God."*

* " Per manum Patris, id est, per Filium et Spiritum Sanctum, factus est homo secundum similitudinem Dei."

Tertullian in his book against Praxeas, chap. xiii. writes thus, "We say that the Father and the Son are two, and that with the Holy Ghost they are three; but we are never heard to say that there are two Gods and two Lords, not as if the Father were not God, and the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, and each one of them God," &c.*

St. Cyprian in his Epistle to Jubajanus, "As three are one thing, how can the Holy Ghost be reconciled to him who is an enemy either of the Father or of the Son."† St. Dionysius of Alexandria in his answer to the propositions of Paul of Samosata, "for unless Christ were God the Word, says he, he could not but be subject to sin, for there is none not subject to sin, except Christ only, as also the Father of Christ and the Holy Ghost."‡ And all these Fathers lived before the Council of Nice, held in the year 325.

After the condemnation of the Arian Heresy at Nice, the following Fathers employed their pens against the impugners of the Holy Ghost, viz. St. Athanasius in his Epistle to Serapion; Didymus in his book on the Holy Ghost; St. Hilary in in his books on the Trinity; St. Basil, in his books against Eunomius and on the Holy Ghost; St. Gregory Nazianzen in his thirty-seventh oration; St. Ambrose in his books on the Holy Ghost; Theodoretus, in his eighth book against heresies, chapter on the Holy Ghost; St. Epiphanius in Panario seventy-fourth heresy; St. Gregory Nyssen in the book against Eunomius; St. Augustin, in his books on the Trinity, and against Maximinus an Arian; St. Cyril of Alexandria in the Treasury; St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Cathech. xvi. and xvii.

* "Duos definimus et Patrem, et Filium, et jam tres cum Spiritu Sancto. Duos tamen Deos et duos Dominos nunquam ex ore nostro proferimus: non quasi non et Pater Deus, et Filius Deus, et Spiritus Sanctus Deus, et Deus unusquisque, &c."

† "Cum tres unum sunt, quomodo Spiritus Sanctus placatus esse ei potest, qui aut Patris aut Filii inimicus est?"

‡ Nisi enim esset Christus Deus Verbum, non potuisset non esse peccato obnoxius. Nullus enim non obnoxius est peccato, nisi unus Christus, ut et Pater Christi et Sanctus Spiritus."

Third proof, from the authority of Councils.

CXLVIII. The Arian heresy was proscribed by the Nicene Synod in these words of the Symbol, "We believe in the Holy Ghost."

The error of Macedonius was condemned by the Synod of Alexandria, which was held after the return of St. Athanasius in the year 362, by the Synod of Illyricum in the year 367, and by the councils celebrated at Rome under Pope Damasus, who addressed a synodical epistle to the bishops of Illyricum, and which has been preserved by Theodoretus, lib. 2. Hist. Eccles. c. 22. "And this error has been spread after the council of Nice, says this holy Pontiff, that some should dare say with a sacrilegious mouth, that the Holy Ghost was made by the Son. We anathematize those who do not, with all possible freedom, proclaim, that he has one and the same power with the Father and the Son. We anathematize Arius and Eunomius, who with like impiety, although in a different way of expressing it, assert that the Son and the Holy Ghost are nothing more than creatures. We anathematize the Macedonians, who, sprung from the stock of Arius, have changed not their perfidy but their name. If any man do not say, that the Holy Ghost is truly and properly from the Father, as the Son is, of the divine substance, and that he is true God, let him be anathema. If any one say, that there are not three true persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, let him be anathema. If any one say that the Holy Ghost is not to be adored by all creatures, as the Son and the Father, let him be anathema."*

* "Επειδη μετα την εν νικαια συνοδον, αυτη η πλανη ανεκυψεν ωσε τολμαν τινας βεβηλω στοματι ειπειν, το πνευμα το αγιον γεγενεσαι δια τοῦ υιοῦ, αναθεματιζομεν τους μη μετα πασης ελευθεριας κηρυττοντας συν τω πατρι και τω υιω της μιας και της τυτης ουσιας τε και εξουσιας υπαρχειν το Αγιον πνευμα . . . Αναθεματιζομεν Αρειον και Ευνομιον, οι τη ισῃ δυσσεβεια ει και τοις ρηματι διαφερονται, τον υιον και το Αγιον πνευμα, κτισμα ειναι διισχυειρονται. Αναθεματιζομεν Μακεδονιανους, οιτινες εκ της Αρειας ριζης καταγομενοι, εχι την ασεβειαν, αλλα την προσηγοριαν ενηλλαξαν . . .

The same heresy was proscribed by the first council of Constantinople, which, with a view of condemning the error of the Macedonians, added to those words of the Nicene symbol, "We believe in the Holy Ghost," the following words, "Lord and life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father, who is to be adored and conglorified with the Father and the Son: who hath spoken by the holy prophets."† This council and the condemnation of Macedonius made in it was approved by Pope Damasus in a council held at Rome by the western bishops, at the very same time that the eastern bishops were assembled at Constantinople.

Last proof, from the argument of Prescription.

CXLIX. In the fourth century the church believed the Holy Ghost to be true God, consubstantial with the Father, and with the Son; therefore, there existed always in the former ages the same faith of the church about the divinity of the Holy Ghost. Why so? Because, if this was not the primitive faith of the church, the supposed primitive faith was, of course, changed at some succeeding age, and if so, it will be incumbent on the Unitarians to show, and clearly to point out, *first*, at what precise period of time the dogma of the divinity of the Holy Ghost was first introduced into the Christian world. *Secondly*, in what place or part of the world. *Thirdly*, by whose agency. *Fourthly*, by whose patronage. *Fifth and lastly*, who were those that opposed that innovation, and what noise and disturbances its introduction caused in the world. Since, therefore, the Unitarians are not able, in the present

ει τις μη ειπη, τον υιον γεννηθεντα εκ τυ πατρος, τυτεστιν, εκ της υσιας θειας αυτυ, αναθεμα εστω . . . ει τις μη ειπη, τυ πατρος και τυ υιυ και τυ Αγιυ πνευματος μιαν θεοτητα, εξυσιαν, δυναστειαν, μιαν δοξαν, κυριοτητα, μιαν βασιλειαν, μιαν θεληστν και αληθειαν, αναθεμα εστω—ει τις τρια προσωπα μη ειπη αληθινα, τυ πατρος και τυ υιυ, και τυ Αγιυ πνευματος, αναθεμα εστω, &c. Theodoret lib. v. cap. 2.

* Credimus in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, ex Patre procedentem, cum Patre et Filio adorandum et conglorificandum: qui locutus est per sanctos prophetas."

case, to show the smallest vestige of any of the five points mentioned, good logic forces us to conclude, that the doctrine of the divinity of the Holy Ghost, was a doctrine received from the Apostles themselves, and no ways introduced at any posterior period.

Now, that the belief of the divinity of the Holy Ghost was universal throughout the Christian world, in the fourth century, is incontestable from the testimonies of those Fathers, whose names we have mentioned, and from the church history of those times; for it is an undoubted fact, that those, who denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost, in the fourth century, were condemned by the church as heretics, and that by no other way could they be re-united to it, but by abjuring their error. So we learn that in the council of Alexandria in the year 362, it was exacted from those that returned to the church, that they should execrate Arian impiety, together with those who said, that the Holy Ghost was not God. S. Basil would not receive Eustathius of Sebaste into the communion of the church, but after having subscribed to the divinity of the Holy Ghost. Add to this that most ancient and renowned glorification, by which the hymns of the church were every where terminated, "Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," or, "with" or, "in the Holy Ghost," which St. Basil in his book on the Holy Ghost, cap. 29, writes to have been indiscriminately used by St. Irenæus, St. Clement of Rome, St. Dionysius of Alexandria, St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, Origen, &c.*

SECTION II.

CL. After having established the dogma of the divinity of the Holy Ghost on the exalted authority of the divine Scriptures, and the united testimony of the Christian world for the

* The dogma of the divinity of the Holy Ghost will derive another irrefragable proof from the arguments which shall be adduced, to establish the Godhead of Jesus Christ, since there is scarce a monument of antiquity in support of the divinity of Christ, that does not go to prove at the same time, that the Holy Ghost is true God.

space of upwards of eighteen hundred years, the public, no doubt, expects that we should take some notice of the arguments, by which Unitarians pretend to overturn this dogma. I shall first advert to what I find advanced against the divinity of the Holy Ghost, by a recent Unitarian journalist in his abstract of Unitarian belief.

"That the Holy Ghost is not a person, is evident from the various characters, attributed to it in the Scriptures. It is said to be *poured out*, *shed forth*, *given without measure*, and in *portions*. Men are said to *drink* into it, and it is at one time represented, as being *taken away*, and at another as *quenched*; but none of these things are applied to a person, and at the same time God, these characteristics would be absurd and impossible. You cannot say of God, that he is "shed forth, taken away, or quenched." Men are often said, also to be "filled with the Holy Spirit." But how can a man be filled with a person as with God? There is one text very decided on this subject. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."* But how would this be true, if the Holy Ghost were a person, equal with the Father and the Son? Would not the Spirit know both the Father and the Son, and this without any revelation? In short, we think if the Scriptures prove any thing, it is, that the Holy Ghost so often mentioned in them, is a supernatural influence, communicated to men by the power and agency of God."

Mighty arguments, indeed, and worthy of those superior esprits-forts, who, armed with their vaunted reason, come in the eighteenth century to instruct mankind and to teach them what they are to believe or to reject: and who have modesty enough equivalently to tell all christendom: For these eighteen hundred years, all Christians were nothing more, neither are you at present, any thing more than a pack of dunces: all preceding ages, all the Fathers of the church, all ecclesiastical historians, all the councils held to this day, the Jus-

* The Unitarian Miscellany, &c. No. 1, p. 17.
† Matth. xi. 27.

tins, the Athenagorases, the Dionysiuses of Rome, or Alexandria, the Origens, the Tertullians, the Irenæuses, the Cyprians, the Athanasiuses, all the holy Martyrs, &c. had either no reason, or did not know how to make use of it: from a want of good sense they were all idolaters, in adoring as true God, the Son and the Holy Ghost, who, in the teeth of all past and present generations, we tell you, are not God.

The Christian world had assuredly time enough to see and to weigh these miserable quibbles; they saw them and despised them, as the silly fancies of an extravagant reason that is only fit to beget monsters when left to itself. Do our new teachers piously believe that it would be reasonable for us to prefer the reason of a few individuals to the general and united reason of the past and present Christian ages? Were it given to the Roman bard to listen to this, would he not in his usual mirth exclaim, "*Risum teneatis Amici?*"

Now let us examine in detail the above extract. "It is said to be poured out, shed forth, given without measure and in portions—to be taken away, to be quenched. But none of these things are applicable to a person and at the same time God, these characteristics would be absurd and impossible. You cannot say of God that he is shed forth, taken away or quenched."

This mode of reasoning is exactly like this: The true God of heaven and earth, the Lord of Hosts, the Jehovah, is described in the Scriptures as "repenting, and being touched inwardly with sorrow of heart."* "As jealous, full of anger, and incensed with wrath," but none of these characteristics are applicable to a divine person; these characteristics would be absurd and impossible. You cannot say of God that he is repenting, jealous, angry, &c. as little as you can say that he is poured out, shed, &c. Therefore the eternal Father, (the only Lord of Hosts, and Jehovah, according to the Unitarians,) is not true God, and, of course, there is no God at all. Is it not wiser for Christians to keep piously the

* Genesis, vi. v. 6.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, than to be with the Unitarians without God at all? Again: The eternal Father in the Scriptures is said to have limbs, a heart, eyes, feet, arms, and bowels, but this cannot be said of a divine person, of God, therefore, it follows again, that the eternal Father is not God, and that, of course, there is no God at all. What will the Unitarian answer in reply to this reasoning? He will, and must answer, no doubt, that, when the eternal Father is said to be repenting, sorrow inwardly, or to have limbs like us, these passages must be taken in a mystical or metaphorical sense, so as to make the sorrow signify the displeasure or disapprobation of the Lord, and the arms, for instance, his power, the eyes, his knowledge and providence, &c. after the same manner, we reply, that, when the Holy Ghost is said "to be poured out, shed forth," &c. &c. all these expressions must be taken, not in their natural, but spiritual meaning, that is to say, not spoken of the Person of the Holy Ghost himself, but of the communication of his divine gifts, which the apostle mentions, 1 Corinth. 12. and which are "poured forth," given with measure, &c.

The Unitarian will add that it is not from these passages, in which the eternal Father is said to be sorry, or to have limbs, &c. that he proves him to be a divine person, or to possess the divine nature, but from other clear and unquestionable texts, so likewise answer the Christians to the above objection, viz. that it is not by the texts, in which the Holy Ghost is said to be poured out, to be shed," &c. that they prove the divinity and consubstantiality of the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son, but from other clear and most unequivocal passages, such as those which we have adduced,* and which are so decisive and so peremptory, that it will require more than all the Unitarian ingenuity to metamorphose the divine *person* of the Holy Ghost into "the mere power and agency of God." The world has understood them so hitherto, and sound logic teaches us that the authority of a world is greater than that of a few new teachers. Let us proceed.

* Pages, 197—199.

"Men are often said, also, to be "filled with the Holy Spirit," but how can a man be filled with a person or with God?"

If a man cannot be filled with a person or with God, then it necessarily follows again that there is no God at all; for if the eternal Father be true God, then it is an article of faith as certain in philosophy as theology, that we are filled with him, and that there is not the smallest point in us, with which God does not co-exist, which he does not thoroughly penetrate, and with which he is most intimately present not only by his power, but also by his divine essence: "do I not fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?"* "For in him we live, we move and are."† True it is, that, when we are thus filled with God, we do not circumscribe or confine his immensity to our being; but whoever told the Unitarian that, when we "are filled with the Holy Ghost," we contain him within ourselves so as to hinder him from being present every where else? And by the bye, I wish the Unitarian who denies that the Holy Ghost, with which we are filled, is a divine person, would explain to me this mystery which the light of reason alone sets beyond all doubt, viz. how one and the same most simple and indivisible substance of God can thoroughly penetrate and pervade every point of our being, and there exist whole and entire, without being divided or circumscribed, and so exist whole and entire in every imaginable point of the universe. This is a natural and most undoubted truth, but a truth, too, which all the Unitarian ingenuity will never reach to explain.

"There is one text very decided on this subject "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whom soever the Son will reveal him?" But how would this be true, if the Holy Ghost were a person, equal with the Father and the Son? Would not the Spirit know both the Father and the Son, and this without any revelation?"

This text is decided on this subject in the eye of the Uni-

* Jerem. xxiii. v. 24. † Acts xvii. v. 28.

tarian, because he is sure never to find in the Scriptures but what he wishes to find. But these strange interpreters are of too late a date, for their new interpretation to prevail against the authority of eighteen centuries, which with St. Ambrose in his first book on the Holy Ghost, chap. iii. have always understood, that in the above text all *created* persons, indeed, such as men and angels are excluded, but by no means the *divine* Persons, or else the sacred Scripture would contradict itself; because the Apostle, 1 Corinth. ii. 10. writes of the Holy Ghost, "But to us God hath revealed them by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the profound things of God," and verse 11. "The things that are of God no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God." It is therefore to be observed, that it is the custom of the Scripture to speak now of one person only, now of two, now of all three together, according as opportunity offers, and a particular reason may require, that the divinity of one person should be in a particular manner inculcated. As, therefore, because the Scripture often makes only mention of Christ, as in this text to the Galatians, iii. "For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ," or of the Holy Ghost as in the Book of Wisdom I. "The Spirit of the Lord has replenished the whole world," and I. Corinth. xii. "All these things one and the same spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will," it does by no means follow, that in baptism we do not put on the Father, or that the Father and the Son are not immense, or do not work the things which the Holy Ghost is said to work, so likewise because express mention is not made somewhere of the Holy Ghost, it does not follow, that the Scriptures exclude the Holy Ghost from the Godhead or the divine operations.

In a periodical Magazine,* I find an article of some length "on the use and meaning of the phrase, *Holy Spirit*," the purport of which is to show that the phrase "Holy Spirit" signifies any thing else, except what the christian world al-

* The Christian Disciple, and Theological Review, No. 4. vol. 1. p. 260—272.

ways took it for a *divine person:* But these new interpreters come too late to be listened to. What the phrase, *Holy Spirit*, signifies, we have learnt from our ancestors, our ancestors from the Apostles, and the Apostles from Christ. Yes, the constant and uniform belief of eighteen hundred years, about the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, comes from the Apostles, the very founders of christianity, or else let the Unitarian point out, if he can, by what Pontiff or council, by what man or number of men, in what age, and in what country, it was first introduced. This belief is, therefore, Apostolical, and, of course, true and divine: and as the Unitarian creed stands in direct opposition to it, it must needs be human and false.

To infer with *the Christian Disciple* that, because this phrase, *the Holy Spirit*, is used sometimes in scripture for *God himself*, sometimes to express the *power of God*, his *wisdom*, his *will* or his *command*; at other times to denote a *single gift or endowment*, such as power, wisdom, courage, or skill, in some art: finally, to signify the moral influence employed by God in *any way;* all which we most readily grant. To infer from this, I say, with the said Journalist, that the phrase, *Holy Spirit*, never signifies *a Divine Person*, would be a mode of arguing similar to this: The word *Jerusalem*, in scripture, now signifies the militant church, now the triumphant, and at times the soul of the just man, therefore it never signifies in a true and literal sense the material city of Jerusalem. Now that the phrase *Holy Spirit*, besides the above meanings, is chiefly and principally, at least, in certain places, intended to signify *a true Divine Person*, is proved beyond the possibility of a doubt. *First*, from the very form of baptism prescribed by Christ, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." *Secondly*, from the promise *of the Holy Ghost.*" St. John, xiv. v. 16, 17, 27.—xv. v. 26.—16. From the tenor of these chapters Christ the incarnate wisdom of God must be necessarily supposed (which cannot be done without a shocking blasphemy)

to have spoken contrary to all the rules of human language, if by the *Holy Ghost* he did not mean a divine person, as it must be obvious to every one that will peruse them. *Thirdly*, From 1 John, v. 7. "For there are three that give testimony in Heaven; the Father, the Word, the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." See our scriptural proofs above.

The author just quoted labours in vain to establish parallel instances of bold personification that occur both in the Old and New Testament, in which such things as unquestionably are not persons, are described with all the attributes of a person. So, he thinks, are described the *Stone* of Joshua (Joshua xxiv. 26, 27.)—next *wisdom* (Proverbs i. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9.) *Thirdly*, *Sin* and *death* (Rom. xix. 17.—vi. 12, 14, 17, 23.—1 Cor. xv. 55, 57.)—and lastly *charity* (1 Cor. 13.)

For, assuredly, whatever strong epithets, glowing language, and bold figures Joshua and St. Paul make use of, the former in speaking of the *stone* of testimony, and the latter in describing *sin*, *death*, and *charity*, there is no man in his senses, that will ever be tempted to take a *stone*, or *sin*, or *death*, or, in fine, *charity*, for a true living person: for in these instances the subject-matter itself, the connexion with the context, and the aim of the sacred writer point out the meaning so clearly, that it is not possible for any man to be misled by any bold figurative language. On the contrary, the scripture language relative to the personality of the Holy Ghost, is so decisive, so irresistible, so absolutely unsusceptible of any other meaning, that the christian world, for the lapse of eighteen centuries, have invariably understood it of a true and real person. As to *wisdom*, if taken abstractively, it is self-evident that it cannot mean a person, but if understood in a concrete sense, that is, as actually existing and acting, as it is generally taken by the fathers of the church in that place, where wisdom is said to have built her house, furnished her table, mingled her wine, &c. then it means a true Divine Per-

son, the uncreated and incarnate wisdom, the only begotten Son of God.

CLI. Against the arbitrary and unheard of interpretations of the Scriptures on this and other subjects, on which the Unitarian differs from all christendom of the present and past ages, we deem it important to remind the reader never to lose sight of the unanswerable argument which we have developed, (III Number, page 106.—124.) and which is equally applicable to all controverted points between Christians and Unitarians. Indeed, these new teachers have no right whatever to be listened to, nor are we Christians under any obligation whatever to dispute with them from the Scriptures, or to go to the trouble to examine the merits of their system, or to establish our christian doctrines by scriptural evidence; for we have a much shorter and surer way, a way adapted to the meanest capacity, a way to which nothing can be replied, and which settles the question at once for ever. Which is this way? It is to examine, not in what way the teachers of the Unitarian school interpret the Scriptures, or in how many different senses the same scripture may be taken by this or that set of prepossessed and partial men; (for it is well known, that there is no passage in the Scriptures so clear, that may not be tortured by party-men into ten thousand different and even opposite meanings;) but to examine in what way the Church of God and the whole christian people have always and every where understood them: To examine, not what any new sect, for instance, the Unitarian, teaches, respecting the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, but what the christian world has always believed on these subjects: for this constant, uniform, and universal belief and practice of the whole church of God respecting these doctrines being once established: this plain and simple question arises: Whence could this constant, uniform, and universal consent and practice possibly originate? As we find no source or beginning of it at any period posterior to the Apostolic age, philosophy compels us to trace it to the preaching of the Apostles, after the same manner as good sense forces us, and will

force our posterity to refer the declaration of American independence to the year 1776, and not to any other period either anterior or posterior, since at any anterior period we do not find it atchieved, and at any posterior period we find it already established and in full operation.

But if the doctrines in question emanate from the Apostles, they are, therefore, true, they are revealed, they are divine; therefore, without examining any further the Unitarian system, or inquiring into its titles, we know before hand, that it is anti-apostolical, and of course a human invention.

CLII. There is scarcely an Unitarian production,* in which we are not triumphantly asked, where in the Scriptures can you point out to us the words: *Trinity, consubstantial, person*, or these phrases: *There are three persons in one supreme God:* or: *Jesus Christ is consubstantial with the Father*, or: *the Holy Ghost is the third person of the Trinity*, &c.? As, therefore, such like words or sentences are not to be met with in the Scriptures, the Unitarian writers thence infer with an air of triumph, that the said mysteries are evidently unscriptural.

With a view of dispatching once for all this frivolous, contemptible, and hackneyed objection, I beg leave to make these few remarks.

First of all, this kind of objection is by no means peculiar to the Unitarians, but has been common to all the innovators of past ages. For as all their strength lies in equivocations, fallacies and subterfuges, by which they are used to conceal, under language apparently orthodox or even Scriptural the tenour of their heresy, they cannot bear the idea, that such terms or expressions should be consecrated by the church to define and express her doctrine, as are unsusceptible of a different sense or of equivocation. Hence the clamours of the Arians against the term: *Consubstantial*, *Trinity*, of the Nestorians against the expression "θεοτοκος, Mother of God," &c. From these instances it is an incontestible fact, that the church of God considered herself at all times in possession

* See Jared Sparks' W. letter, page 148, &c. the Christian Disciple, the Unitarian Miscellany, and other Unitarian publications passim.

of an undefeasible right of fixing and determining her faith by such expressions, as she thought fittest to distinguish it from all other doctrines, and to cut off for ever all possible cavil or crafty interpretation of her enemies. And, indeed, why should we dispute the church of God a right, which every commonwealth, every legislator; nay, even every private individual has to deliver his thoughts after such a manner and in such language, as he deems fittest to render it impossible for any one to mistake his meaning, or to put on it a wrong construction? Or shall we be told that the commonwealth exceeds the limits of its power, when, on a doubt arising about the true meaning of any article of our constitution, or on perceiving that a false and pernicious construction is put upon it, adopts and consecrates an expression, which defines its real and only true signification, and once for all precludes all possibility of distorting the law from its true and intended meaning? Shall, in such cases, the declaration of the Government, or the sentence of a Judge be invalid or void of effect, because it is not word for word couched in the very expressions of the Constitution or of the law?

To silence, therefore, forever these childish clamours of our Unitarian friends, we, in imitation of the fathers of the church*, retort with infinite advantage the argument upon them, and ask them in our turn: In what part of the Scripture do you find those words or sentences in which you so uniformly affect to express your creed, if creed it can be called, and not rather a denial of all creed, a denial of the Trinity, of the Divinity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost, a denial of Christ's atonement for mankind, and of the necessity of grace for the performance of salutary works? The words *Trinity*, *consubstantiality*, *Person*, &c. are not to be

* But in what Scripture have they themselves (the Arians) found "*the name of substance: there are three Hypostases:* and: *Christ is not true God:* and many other like words and phraseologies, which the Arians daily use, and which still are not read in the Scriptures? It matters not, whether you make use of Scriptural expressions or not, provided you maintain the orthodox doctrine The Heterodox, although he use no other but Scripture expressions, will not less hear from the Holy Ghost, "why dost thou declare my justices?" Psalm. xlix. 16. Athanasius lib. de Synodis, Tom. I page 752.

found in the Scriptures; but in which of the sacred writings do you find the words of your own creed: The *unity of God*, the *supremacy* of God, the *Supreme Being*, the *unity of Christ*, or these sentences: *Christ is not God, but only the Messenger of God, Christ is nothing more than man. In Christ there is but one nature, viz. that of man. The Holy Ghost is not a subsisting Person, but only the influence and agency of God, &c.* Our opponents, I am aware, will reply, although on a most gratuitous assumption, that it would be in vain, indeed, to look out in the Scriptures for these words and sentences in this precise form and shape, but that still they are not the less correct, because they are at least virtually or implicitly implied in the Scriptures, or drawn from them by a necessary inference; now they will permit us to return them exactly the same answer, not however without ground, but on irresistible authority, and to reply that the terms and phrases, *trinity of Persons, unity of Nature, consubstantiality of the Son and of the Holy Ghost with the Father, there are two natures in Jesus Christ, viz. the Divine and the Human*, although not literally and explicitly found in the Scriptures, still are clearly and equivalently contained in them in words of equal import, and as necessarily deduced from them as evident and immediate conclusions are deduced from first principles. For instance, it is no where said in these formal words: *there exists a Trinity of Persons in the unity of the Divine nature*, but the same is equivalently expressed, first, in the well known passages (Math. xxviii. 19, and i. John, v. 7, and others cited above;) for from them we learn that there are *three* in God; since, therefore, we know that there can be but one indivisible nature in God, we necessarily infer that there must be three distinct persons, and not three distinct natures; next the Trinity as taught hitherto by the Christian world necessarily flows from those Scriptural facts and passages, which have been adduced to establish the Divinity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost; for as there can be but one God, there being but one and the same indivisible divine nature, it follows of course on the one hand, that, since the Son and the Holy Ghost are true

God, and on the other are distinct from the Father and from each other, they must be three distinct persons in one and the same divine essence, or, in other words, that in God there is a *Trinity* of persons and an *Unity* of essence. In like manner in vain would you look through all the range of the Scriptures for this phrase: *There are two natures in Christ*, or *Christ is at once true God and true man*, but you find this truth equivalently expressed and necessarily implied, first, (in St. John i. 1, 14,) "in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was *God*—and the world was made by him, and without him nothing was made that was made—and the word was made *flesh*." Next in this other passage, (John x. 30,) "I and the Father are one," and "the Father is greater than I," (John xiv. 28,) (Philip ii. 6,) "who (Christ) being in the *form of God*, thought it no robery himself to be *equal to God*, but debased himself, taking *the form of a servant*," in fine, by that mass of Scripture evidence, which goes irresistibly to prove that Christ was both true man and true God, and that, of course, he must needs possess both the nature of man and the nature of God.*

The following lines, written by one of the most elegant and profound writers of the past age, will make us sensible of the immense difference there is between the word of God, commented upon by the learned enlightened by faith, and between the same word of God handled by prophane reasoners.

MEDITATION. LXXI DAY.

God the Holy Ghost. John xiv. 16, 17, 26.

CLIII. "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever."† Another Paraclete! A Paraclete, a consoler in the place of Jesus Christ, if en-

* As we intend to review the V. and VI. letters of B. Jared Sparks against B. Dr. Wyatt, which are exclusively levelled against the Trinity, the Divinity of the Son of God and of the Holy Ghost, we designedly supersede answering any further objections against the said mysteries in this place.

† John, c. 14 and 16.

dowed with less virtue and dignity, would rather afflict than console mankind. A Paraclete, then, in Jesus' stead, is no less than a God in the place of a God. And, therefore, if the Son come to us, and abide with us, as the Father does; the Holy Ghost abideth likewise with us, and is in us,* as well as the Father and the Son do. He abides with them in our interior; as they, so he vivifies us. We are his temple as we are that of the Father and of the Son. "*Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*"?† "*Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, and you are not your own*"?‡ For a temple has not the proprietorship of itself, but God who inhabits it. He then who abides, and is in us, (according to the expression of Jesus Christ,) as the Father and the Son are, is God; and when he dwells in us and possesses us, he acts, if I may be allowed to say so, in the peculiar capacity of God.

"*He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you.*"‖ Will he appear visible to your corporal eyes? Will he speak to your ears? No: your interior is his school, and hence you will hear his voice. It is here likewise the Father speaks, and here we learn from him to come to the Son. Who can speak to our interior, who can turn it whithersoever he will, if it be not he who fills it, he who acts in it, that is to say, God? The Holy Ghost then is God, for it is another peculiar act of God to speak to our interior, and to cause himself thence to be understood.

"*I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But the Spirit of truth will come and teach you all truth.*"§ To him are reserved the highest and most hidden truths, &c.; to him is reserved the province to increase your strength, so that you may be capable of receiving them. Who can effect this, save God? Then the Holy Ghost is God.

"*And the things that are to come he shall show you.*"¶ He means to say that it is the province of the Holy Ghost the Paraclete to raise prophets, to inspire them, and this is cer-

* John, v. 17. † Cor. c. 3, v. 6. ‡ Ibid. 6, v. 19. § John 16, v. 26.
‖ John 16, v, 12, 13. ¶ Ibid. v. 13.

tainly reserved to God alone. It is true, the Son of God says, that he shall speak only what he has heard;* but he has not heard otherwise than the Son of God: he has heard what he has received in virtue of his eternal procession, as the Son has heard what he has received in virtue of his eternal generation.

For we must know that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father in as a perfect a manner as the Son. The Son proceeds from the Father by generation; and how does the Holy Ghost proceed from him? Who can explain it? No mortal man: and I am ignorant if the Angelic Spirits can. What I know, and what is certain from the expression of Jesus Christ, is, that he is not begotten as the Son is, and he is still less, to speak in a human manner, created as we are. "He shall receive of mine,"† says the Son. Creatures come from God, but they do not take of God's; they are produced from nothing: but the Holy Ghost takes of God's as the Son does—and is equally produced from his substance. We do not say, therefore, that he is created: God forbid we should—there is a term consecrated to him; and it is, that he proceeds from the Father. It is true that the Son also proceeds from him: and if his procession has a distinctive character which is generation; it is sufficient to equal the Holy Ghost to him, to exclude every term which indicates creation, and to select one which may be common to him with the Son.

If the Son is begotten, why is the Holy Ghost not begotten? Let us not investigate the reasons of this incomprehensible difference. Let us simply say: If there be many sons, many generations, the Son would be imperfect, and his generation too. All that is infinite, all that is perfect, is unique: and the Son of God is unique, because he is perfect. His generation drains, if we may speak so of infinity, all his paternal fecundity. What then remains for the Holy Ghost? Something as perfect, although less distinctly known. He is not less perfect

* John, v. 15. † Ibid. xvi. v. 14.

because less distinctly known, since on the contrary this char- things of God, which are not the least perfect. It is enough to know that he, like the Son, is unique: unique as Holy Ghost, acter only serves to place his procession among the unknown in like manner as the Son is unique as Son: and that he proceeds as nobly, as divinely as he: since he proceeds in order to be placed on equality with him.

Hence, when he appears, a work equal to the Son's is attributed to him. This we have remarked in these words of our Saviour: "*And when he shall have come, he will convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment:*"* a work which is not inferior to the works of the Son.

If we carefully collect all the expressions of the Son of God, we shall discover a language which at once imports distinction and unity, origin and independency of these divine persons. The Son belongs to the Father, the Father belongs to the Son; each one on a different, but at the same time, equal title. The Holy Ghost belongs to the Son, he belongs to the Father, on a similar title, and without derogating from perfection: the Father sends him, the Son sends him, he comes. This is that mystic language of the Trinity, which is not fully comprehended but by reconciling unity and distinction in an equal perfection. And it is thus all the expressions of Jesus Christ, which we have seen, agree: and, to collect them together, he epitomised them in the form of Baptism: "Baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."† All that he said in a lengthy discourse, is referred to this, and what he says here, reunites all that he mentioned in his long discourse.

And why does he speak to us of these exalted mysteries, unless it be to unfold them one day to our naked eyes? A teacher commonly prefaces the entire developement of truth to his disciples, by informing them in general terms what they are to learn in his lectures. Jesus Christ also begins by telling us confusedly what he will one day discover most clearly to us in his glory. Let us therefore believe, and we shall see.

* John 16, v. 8. † Matt. 28, v. 19.

Let us not be astonished at difficulties, we are still in the preludes of our knowledge: let us not be satisfied with these first elements: let us desire to behold: and, in the mean time, let us content ourselves with believing." *B. Bossuet, Tom.* x. *page* 299, *and following—last edition.*

UNITARIANISM

PHILOSOPHICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY EXAMINED.

NO. VI.

On the God-head of Jesus Christ.

" Γινεται δε κατα τουτον τον χρονον Ιησους σοφος ανηρ, ειγε ανδρα αυτον λεγειν χρη; ην γαρ παραδοξων εργων ποιητης, διδασκαλος ανθρωπων των ηδονη τἀληθη δεχομενων. Και πολλους μεν Ιουδαιους, πολλους δε και του Ἑλληνικου επηγαγετο. ο Χριστος ουτος ην. Και αυτον ενδειξει των πρωτων ανδρων παρ ἡμιν, σταυρω επιτετιμηκοτος Πιλατου, ουκ εξεπαυσαντο οι γε πρωτον αυτον αγαπησαντες; εφανη γαρ αυτοις τριτην εχων ημεραν παλιν ζων, των θειων προφητων ταυτα τε καὶ αλλα μυρια θαυμασια περι αυτου ειρηκοτων, εισετι τε νυν των Χριστιανων απο τουδε ωνομασμενων ουκ επελιπε το φυλον."
Josephus, lib. xviii. 3.

"About this time lived Jesus, a wise man, *if man, indeed, he can be called;* for he wrought astonishing works, and was the instructer of those who embrace the truth with readiness. He obtained, as well among the Jews as among the Gentiles, a multitude of followers. He was the Christ: who being accused by the leaders of our nation, was sentenced by Pilate to the death of the cross; notwithstanding this those that loved him from the beginning, did not cease to be devoted to him. For on the third day he appeared to them living again, as this and many other wonderful things had been foretold of him by the Prophets; and moreover the race of the Christians who have derived from him their name, continues to exist to the present day."

"Oui, si la vie et la mort de Socrate sont d'un sage, la vie et la mort de Jesus sont d'un Dieu."

"Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God." J. J. Rousseau. *Emile, Tom. III. page* 189.

PREFACE.

CLIV. It is painful in the extreme to reflect, that in the eighteen hundredth year of the christian æra, we should be under the necessity of vindicating the Divinity of him, whom, in unison with the whole christian world, during the long lapse of eighteen centuries, we have hitherto adored as our God and our Maker; and in whom men have, to this present day, placed

all their hopes of felicity, both in time and eternity: doomed as we are, to witness with what fury and perseverance this new band of giants leagued "against the Lord and his Christ" rage against him, who redeemed them, and how determined they seem to be, not unlike the insane and proud builders of Babel in their ungodly design of dethroning the only begotten Son of God, we can scarce refrain from exclaiming with a primitive Father, "*Bone Deus, in quæ tempora me reservasti!*" *Good God, for what times hast thou reserved me!** Is it possible, that there should exist a class of men, and of men, too, who style themselves philanthropists and friends to mankind, who should make it their ill-advised business to bereave poor, miserable, and wretched men of all their comforts here below, and of all their bright prospects of an hereafter? For if Christ be not true God, how can man, in his trying hours, under the frowns of fortune, place his confidence in him, since it is written, "accursed is the man who confideth in man?"† And if Christ be not true God and true man, and if he has not atoned for our sins, what becomes of our cheering prospects of a happy eternity, and how can we expect life everlasting through him, who has not, and who, if he be no more than what we ourselves are, could not do any thing for us? It is, thereofore, the cause of all mankind we are promoting, when, although conscious of our inadequacy to so momentous a task, and although more inclined to bow down in deep adoration before the insulted Deity than to dispute, we step forward to vindicate the divinity of him, whose praises the church has been singing with the Ambroses and Augustins for these twelve hundred years past. "We praise thee, O God—the holy church throughout all the world does acknowledge thee Father of an infinite Majesty; *thine honourable, true, and only Son*, also the Holy Ghost the Comforter; Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ; Thou art the *everlasting Son of the Father*, &c."‡

* St. Polycarp, disciple of St. John and Martyr. † Jeremiah, xvii. 5.
‡ Hymn, "Te Deum Laudamus."

But does the eternal Son of God stand in need of the exertions of his creatures to defend the rights of his everlasting throne? No, looking down from the seat of his glory upon the foolish projects of his enemies, he views them as an army of moles, whose work shall not stand: His holy church resting upon his solemn promises as upon an immoveable rock, and viewing in the total defeat of her former enemies the fate of the present and future ones, addresses them in the lofty strain of the royal Prophet, "Why have the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord and against his Christ. Let us break their bonds asunder: and let us cast away the yoke from us. He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them: and the Lord shall deride them. Then shall he speak to them in his anger, and trouble them in his rage," Psalm ii. 1—6. The church of God has learnt from the mouth of her divine founder himself, that the faith of Peter, "thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," shall be unshaken in the hearts of his children as long as "the sun endures,"* "to the consummation of time."† Conscious of her divine extraction and of her strength from above, she is sure that the prediction of her divine spouse shall be literally accomplished: "And whatsoever shall fall on this stone (Christ) shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder," Matth. xxi. 44. This stone, i. e. the divine religion of Jesus Christ fell upon Paganism supported by all the might of the high powers of the earth, and it ground it to powder; next a long train of powerful heresies fell upon this stone, and they were broken to pieces. She, in fine, knows that she is invincible, and that all her enemies shall come to nothing: and thus her grand prerogative, which no other shall share with her, is, to be able to sing—"Often have they fought against me from my youth: *but they could not prevail over me.* The wicked have wrought upon my back, they have lengthened their iniquity. The Lord who is just, will cut the necks of

* Psalm lxxi. 7. † Matth. xxviii. 20.

sinners: let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Sion." Psalm cxxviii. 1—4. Some of her enemies have sacrilegiously attempted to unroof the house of God, others to throw down its walls, others, finally, to undermine its very foundations; but what was the result of all these mighty projects? The Lord arose and said, "where are they? I will make the memory of them to cease from among men." Deut. xxxii. 2. Julian, the apostate,* with a view of giving the lie to the clear predictions of Christ, attempts with incredible preparations to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, and this ungodly undertaking has, in the designs of the Most High, no other effect but to give a complete accomplishment to the words of Christ. "There shall remain no stone upon another that shall not be destroyed."† Julian wished to raise what the Lord had thrown down, and he was "confounded," the enemies of religion wish to throw down the church which God has established, and they, too, are "confounded and turned back."

The enemies of the divinity of Jesus Christ, I mean, the Arians have been confounded and turned back as early as the third century, and if the learned works of the christian writers of that age were in the hands of the public, there could be no need of a new refutation of Unitarianism, which is nothing more than the echo of Arianism. But this not being the case, we shall follow these new Arians through all the mazes of

* "Julian conceived the project of rebuilding, at immense expenses, the famous temple which stood once at Jerusalem, and the taking of which cost Vespasian and next Titus his son, many a bloody battle. He for that purpose made incredible preparations, and urged the work with uncommon activity. But no sooner had they dug out the foundations, than, behold, fiery globes issuing forth repeatedly from the same, consumed several times the workmen, and thus rendered the place unapproachable, and so the devouring element continuing to repel with, as it were, an intelligent obstinacy the ungodly undertaking, the project was for ever abandoned." This important event has been left recorded by the contemporary Pagan historian Amminianus Marcellinus, Lib. xxiii. cap. I. who was a great admirer of Julian; next by St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. John Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, &c.

† Mark xiii. 3.

metaphysical subtleties and fallacious sophisms, in which they like to dwell, and thus convince the enemies of religion how impossible it is to attack christianity with any thing like solid and connected reasoning. Let us begin.

DIVISION OF THIS WHOLE DISSERTATION.

CHAPTER I.

On the Personal Greatness or Perfections of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER II.

On the Law and Moral Doctrine of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER III.

Christ, as to his Divine Nature, existed before he was born of the blessed Virgin Mary.

CHAPTER IV.

Christ as God, is begotten of the eternal Father, by an eternal generation.

CHAPTER V.

Christ, by nature and substance, is one and the same God with the Father, or Christ is consubstantial with the Father.

CHAPTER VI.

Objections answered.

CHAPTER I.

On the Personal Greatness or on the Perfections of Jesus Christ.

CLV. In perusing attentively the sacred volumes of the four gospels, I easily discover, that the whole history of Jesus Christ, such as the evangelists have left it to us, reduces itself to three chief heads: namely, to what Jesus Christ *was*, to what he *spoke*, and to what he *did;* or, if you please, to the *personal qualifications* of Jesus Christ, to his *doctrine*, and to his *works or wonders*. The *personal qualifications* of Jesus Christ are so eminent and so admirable, that it is evident that Jesus was the most worthy man that could be chosen by the Almighty, to be the minister of a new revelation and of a new law. The *doctrine* of Jesus Christ, which may be divided

into two parts, the dogma, which contains that which we are to believe, and the morality, which comprises that which we are to practise, is so holy and so sublime, that it is manifestly worthy of God. The *miracles* of Jesus Christ, whether they be considered in themselves, or in relation to the circumstances that accompanied them, are such, that thence it evidently results not only that Jesus Christ was an envoy of God to instruct and to save men, but moreover that he was a *God-man*.

Such are the grand and stupendous objects which the history of Jesus Christ offers to our view, and which we shall now contemplate in the following articles.

ARTICLE I.

Wisdom of Jesus Christ.

CLVI. Had I not been taught from my infancy to look upon Jesus Christ as on my Saviour and my God; did I owe nothing to Jesus Christ, nor look up to him for any thing; were I nothing to Jesus Christ, and were Jesus Christ nothing to me; in fine, had he wrought no miracle whatever, he would nevertheless be the object of my admiration and of my most profound respect. It would be very difficult for me, not to adore him. His wisdom and his virtues are still more above man than his miracles.

No, it is not enough to say that Jesus Christ was the greatest man, the world ever beheld; we ought to say, that he was infinitely above all the ideas which the human understanding is capable of forming to itself of the greatness of man; we ought to say, that, if the eminence of the character of Jesus Christ considered in itself, and quite alone, does not demonstrate absolutely and invincibly that he is God, it proves at least that, if there be any God-man, it is he; it proves that, if it be true that God had a design to become man, he must have taken the character of Jesus Christ and shown himself to the world such as Jesus Christ was. To substantiate this assertion I reason thus:

All the greatness of man consists in the perfection of his nature, which I call here *wisdom*, and in the perfection of his will, which I call *sanctity*. All other advantages, whatever worth, prejudice or vanity may attach to them, contribute nothing to the true greatness of man. One may be very little and despicable, although he possess them all, and one may be very great and venerable, athough he possess none of them. All mankind are agreed upon this head.

Now it will be a very easy task to show, that Christ not only surpassed in wisdom and sanctity all men that ever appeared upon earth before or after him, but that he has fulfilled the whole idea, which the human mind is able, of itself, to conceive of perfect wisdom and of perfect sanctity, and that even he went much beyond that idea.

CLVII. Here is my proof: the wisdom of Jesus Christ shows itself with the greatest lustre in his doctrine, a masterpiece of equity, reason and good sense. We shall make this the matter of a distinct article. What truth, what precision, what perspicuity in the precepts of this grand legislator! I feel that this is the manner which a God, hidden under the form of man, would have used when addressing men.

I feel no less this divine manner in the maxims or sentences which came from the mouth of Jesus Christ. I discover there characteristics with which my mind is the more struck, because it seems next to impossible to unite them together. These maxims are so identified with good sense, that every one adopts and falls in with them, as soon as he hears them enounced, and at the same time they are so new, that it is not possible to hear them pronounced for the first time without being struck. They are so clear, that they cannot but be understood; so true that it is impossible not to assent to them; so simple and so natural that they are within the reach of the most ordinary minds; so great and so beautiful, that they are the admiration of the greatest geniuses. They comprise, in a few words, the most important instructions that have ever been given to men. The more one meditates on them, the more he admires them. These heavenly maxims are suited to

all men, they are a light friendly to all eyes, a spiritual food fit for all minds. "What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what exchange will he give for his soul?"* "Where your treasure is, there is also your heart."† "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."‡ &c.

CLVIII. Who can read the gospel and not be charmed with the beauties of those truly divine parables, in which the incarnate wisdom used to deliver the secrets of his heavenly doctrine! What beauty in the invention of those parables! What a natural easiness in the narration! What justness in the allegory! What solidity in the morality!

Bring to your mind the parable of the prodigal son; that of the seed; that of the unfaithful steward; that of the master of the family, who sends successively, at different hours of the day, several bands of labourers into his vineyard, and, at the end of the day rewards them all equally; that of the ten virgins, &c.

All that the ancient and modern authors have written most excellent in this kind, is nothing in comparison with the parables of Jesus Christ. These authors meant as much to amuse as to instruct men, Jesus Christ was only intent on instructing them, and never thought to amuse them: their principal object was to pourtray the ridiculousness of the conduct of men: Jesus Christ attacked but their vices. They aimed at making men prudent of the prudence of the world, that is to say, at rendering men subtle, cunning, dexterous to avoid the snares that are laid for them, and to lay them, in their turn, for others. Jesus Christ was occupied in rendering men prudent of that prudence only, which consists in the fear of God, in trusting only in him, in preferring duty to all the rest, in sacrificing all for the sake of salvation, and in possessing no other cunning than that of being just and irreproachable. The morality of those writers is often frivolous, and at times pernicious, that of Jesus Christ is always serious and holy; his parables contain always great lessons, worthy of the greatest of all Masters.

* Matth. xvi. 28. † Luke, xii. 34. ‡ Matth. vi. 34.

But what gives to the parables of Jesus Christ a merit which not only sets them above all, that the most celebrated authors have written in that kind, but moreover above all, that the human understanding is capable of imagining, is, that they are at once *theological*, *prophetic*, and *moral;* and that often they present, at the same time, under the same symbol, the image of the designs of God upon men, the image of future events the most interesting for religion, and, in fine, the delineation of our chief duties, and that with so wonderful an art, that all the particularities of the allegory agree equally well with these three grand objects.*

* The Holy Ghost foretold by the prophets, that the Messiah should speak in parables, that this was* to be one of his characteristics; and the evangelists relate of Jesus Christ, that he never "spoke to the people but in parables."†

This manner of instructing has many advantages over all others, it is more adapted to the understanding of the illiterate, it attaches them without fatiguing them. It engraves on their mind more deeply the truth, which it presents under agreeable images; for all these reasons, it was that which a God-man ought to have adopted.

All men do not easily conceive general maxims, and the generality of them are little fit to make the application of them to particular cases, and to the different situations in which they may find themselves in the course of their life, much less are they capable of locking up in their memory a long list of general maxims, of perceiving their relations, and of drawing thence practical inferences. The parable supplies all: first the fable agreeably strikes the imagination by its novelty and singularity, the mind next discovers with delicate pleasure, the justness of the relations that exist between the fable and the maxim or the truth, which it means to inculcate; the hearer or reader carries with him that fable, reflects on it and compares it repeatedly with the truth whose symbol it is: he is always more enchanted with the resemblance, which he perceives between the one and the other, and thus they both are indelibly impressed in the memory.

At all times parables were employed for the instruction of men, and always with the best success. This manner of instructing requires in him that makes use of it, much judgment, and a just and deep mind. It is necessary that the analogy that exists between the symbol and the truth which it is intended to

* "I will open my mouth in parables: I will utter propositions from the beginning." Psalm lxxvii. 2.

† "All these things Jesus spoke in parables to the multitude; and without parables he did not speak to them." Math. xiii. 34.

CLX. I am not less struck at the answers and replies which Jesus Christ makes to those who propose to him captious questions to embarrass him, or to draw from his mouth some decision, of which they might make a crime. Such is that which he made to the Pharisees, who brought to his feet

represent by the symbol, should be exact, at least as to what constitutes the principal object of the comparison, and easy to be seized.

It is especially under this point of view the parables of Jesus Christ deserve all our admiration. For in these parables not only the history or the symbol has an exact relation, in all its circumstances, with the principal object of the comparison; but it moreover applies at once to several objects, all equally great and worthy of God, and agrees with each one with the same justness as to all its circumstances. The first object of these parables is the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth by the preaching of the gospel, its progress and astonishing fruits; the second is the reprobation of the Jews on account of their ingratitude, and the vocation of the Gentiles instead of them; the third the teaching of virtue.

There is scarce any of the parables of Jesus Christ, that has not reference to these three objects, and which does not equally well agree with each of them. This is clearly seen in the parable of the *head of a family*, who sends first his servants, and then his son, to those to whom he had rented his vineyard, and who unmercifully put them to death one after another; in that of *a king*, who makes a great banquet for the wedding of his son, and who seeing himself disdained by those whom he had first invited, causes the poor and wretched of all kinds to be called in their place; in that of the *prodigal child*, who returning from his wanderings, was a figure of the Gentiles; and of his elder brother, who, being jealous of the reception which their common father gives him, was a figure of the Jewish people; in that of the *two brothers*, one of whom at first promised the father to go and work in his field, but after all did not go, and the other who refused at first to go, but notwithstanding went afterwards; in the parable of the *master of a family*, who, at different hours of the day sent several bands of labourers into his vineyard, and causes the same wages to be given to all at the end of the day; in that of the *charitable Samaritan*, a figure of Jesus Christ whom the Jews called by this odious name, and who cured the wounds of the Gentiles, represented by this man who went out from Jerusalem, that is to say, who had abandoned the worship of the true God, and who had fallen a prey to robbers, that is, to the devils. All these parables, which we have just now indicated, and almost all others are at once *theological*, *prophetic*, and *moral*; and in whichever of these three senses they be taken, the allegory is always so just, so well maintained, and so perfectly suiting the subject according to all its particulars, that it is self-evident that there was none but one inspired by God that could unite in the same symbol and under the same point of view, so many different instructions.

a woman surprised in adultery, in order that he might judge her: that which he made to the Herodians, who asked him whether it was lawful for the Jews to pay the tribute to Cæsar.

The mind is astonished at the readiness with which Jesus Christ discovers the most hidden intentions of his enemies; at the presence of mind, the coolness, the noble and peaceful tranquillity, with which he answers them; at the infinite dexterity, with which, whilst he is extricating himself from the intended embarrassment, he suddenly envelopes them in the same snares, which they had laid for him. Without answering their question in a doctrinal manner, he resolves it in one word, and this word is a grand sentence, which contains the most profound lessons, "Let him amongst you that is without sin," he says to the former, "throw the first stone at her." "Give to Cæsar," he says to the latter, after having asked for a piece of money stamped with the image of the prince, "give to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar, and to God what belongs to God." At the moment Jesus pronounces these words, his enemies are seen to be covered with confusion, but they do not appear to be incensed against him, because it was not he, but truth alone, that confounds them. I dare say that, to answer with such wisdom, it was necessary to be prepared for it from all eternity.

CLXI. The exhortations of Jesus Christ are not less deserving the admiration of mankind than his precepts, his maxims, his parables, and his answers. In them a divine eloquence causes itself to be felt. There reigns in them a strength of persuasion, which it is not possible to resist. You imagine that he takes his reasonings from your very mind, so prompt and indeliberate is the assent which you give to them. The moment on which they strike your ears, is the very moment, in which you conceive them and yield your assent to them. Listen to this divine orator, when he exhorts men to abandon themselves to the fatherly cares of divine providence. "Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more

than the food, and the body more than the raiment? (How, therefore, could he, who has given you the life and the body, refuse you the nourishment, of which the one stands in need, and the garment, which is necessary to the other?) Behold, the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns: yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And, which of you can add to his stature one cubit? And for raiment why are you solicitous? consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. And yet I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. Now, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more you, O ye of little faith! Be not solicitous, therefore, saying: what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathen seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye, therefore, first the Kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not, therefore, solicitous for to-morrow: for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Matthew vi. 25—34.

Give ear again to the divine Saviour, when he exhorts men to pray, and to expect every blessing from that God, on whom they call in their wants, "what man is there among you, of whom, if his son ask bread, will he reach him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he reach him a serpent? If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father, who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him." Math. vii. 9—12.

How evil soever you are of yourselves and of your own nature, still you are good towards your children; you love them; you are moved at their wants, their prayers have upon your hearts a power, which you cannot resist, you always give them what is fit for them; how much more will God, who is your Father, be touched with your wants, and suffer himself to be overcome by your prayers, he, who by his nature and essence,

is bounty itself? The love which you have for your children, it is he that has created it in your hearts, how then should he not find it in his own? Do you imagine that he has made you better than he is himself? This is what I conceive to be contained in this admirable exhortation of Jesus Christ. Can there be any thing in the world more true, more beautiful, more sensible, and more persuasive? And who does not feel that it is thus a God-man was to plead before men the cause of his divine attributes?*

* "If any one doubts," says a judicious writer, "of the superiority and transcendent excellence of the doctrine of Jesus Christ above all others that have been precedently taught, let him read with attention those incomparable writings, through the channel of which it has been transmitted to us; and let him compare them with the most renowned productions of the pagan world; and if he does not feel, that they are more than any other writing beautiful, simple, original, I have no difficulty to pronounce him as destitute of taste as of faith, and as poor a critic, as bad a christian. For, where shall we find, in the school of ancient philosophy, lessons of morality comparable to those which are set forth by the Incarnate Wisdom in his Sermon on the Mountain? From what philosopher shall we learn an address to the Deity, such as our Lord's prayer, at once so concise and so expressive, as to contain all our wants and all we are to sue for?

What writing of the sages of antiquity shall furnish us with an exhortation as pathetic and as cogent to engage men to succour those that are in distress, as those words of Jesus Christ: "Then shall the King say to them that are on his right hand: come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in: naked, and you clothed me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me. Then shall the just answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and fed thee: thirsty, and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee? Or when did we see thee sick or in prison, and came to thee? And the king, answering, shall say unto them: Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me," &c. Math. xxiv. 34—41.

What is there in any of the most celebrated poets of pagan antiquity, that can equal in sublimity the description of the joys which are reserved for the just in the life to come: "then shall the just shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father." Math. xiii. 43. "Come ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Math. xxvi. 34. "The eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Cor. ii. 9.

CLXII. The characteristics of the eloquence of Jesus Christ are not less striking, and prove him to be more than *man*. In his discourses this venerable man is so true, so simple, so familiar, so full of good sense, that, whosoever has but the first degree of reason, is capable of understanding him. He is so great, so wise, so deep, that he astonishes the greatest geniuses; however little conception one has, he understands him; and the more wit one possesses, the more he admires him. He is proportionate to the narrowest understandings, and at the same time he is above the most sublime minds.

CLXIII. In the discourses of Jesus Christ, you discover nothing that savours of pageantry and ostentation, because he is without pride: you see nothing that looks like affectation, neither in the choice of words or that of figures, because he has no vanity, and does not seek to make himself to be admired;

Through which of the dark clouds of ancient philosophy could you make us perceive as brilliant a perspective *of the life to come, of the immortality of the soul, of the resurrection of the dead, of the universal last judgment,* as that which is held forth to the christian in the four gospels?

Where in paganism shall we meet with exhortations as pressing to the practice of every virtue, with motives as powerful to piety and zeal, with means as well calculated to make us attain them, as are those which we read at every page in that inimitable book? Were I called upon to cite passages relative to these divine objects, I would have to transcribe almost the whole book. Suffice it to observe, that every where we remark striking traits of a more than human wisdom, which not only renders it superior to all the productions of the human mind, but moreover entirely different from them. This superiority and difference are still more strongly marked by a circumstance which is peculiar to these books, to wit: that whilst their *moral* part, which is of a more general use, is found to be so clear, and so set within the reach of persons of all states and capacities, the learned in exploring its hidden treasures find it to be an inexhaustible mine, which enables them to draw thence, continually, new discoveries on the nature, the attributes, and the dispensations of divine providence. Is it to be wondered at, that after perusing the sacred books, and especially the gospels, one should not be able to read without weariness and disgust the cold maxims of a Zeno, of a Marcus Aurelius, of an Epictetus: maxims delivered without authority, without sanction, without any motive that might guarrantee their observance. I have always admired the good sense of a man who found nothing more insupportable, than those purely philosophical moralities." *Examen of the intrinsic evidence of Christianity, by L. Jenyns.*

nothing that is said to please men, because he is not their flatterer; nothing that is said to strike agreeably the imagination, because he does not seek to amuse them; nothing that savours of satire, because he has too much pity for the miseries of men, to make a sport of them. All the discourses of Jesus Christ retrace to me a man who does not speak to men but to teach them how to be good and happy; who loves them with the purest and most disinterested love. His eloquence is sublime, but this sublimity is that of good sense, that is to say, that, which produces the most prompt, the most universal and the most durable effect, because it is impossible to contradict it, every one imagining within himself, what good sense has dictated to others; that, which we least distrust because it cannot be suspected either of passion, or interestedness, or artifice; that in fine which owes its success but to truth, and, of course, that, which was to characterize the *Incarnate* Truth.

The more we study Jesus Christ in that admirable book, the *Gospel*, which religion has happily placed in our hands from our first youth, the more we shall be struck at the greatness of this adorable God-man. Jesus will always be new for us, we will always imagine we behold him for the first time. Every day we shall discover in his speeches some new trait of reason and wisdom, which we had not as yet seen: every one of his words is a treasure; the body of his doctrine is like a mine of precious metal, which has not as yet been exhausted, although it has been searched for upwards of eighteen hundred years, and that will never be exhausted. All in it is true, all is beautiful, all full of sense: the purest reason beams in it throughout: nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be retrenched from it: all in it is necessary, and nothing is wanting. It is the master-piece of him who makes nothing but what is perfect—I mean, of God.

ARTICLE II.

Sanctity of Jesus Christ.

CLXIV. To have shown that Jesus Christ was the wisest of men, a man *perfectly* wise, is to have demonstrated, that he was also the holiest of men, a man *perfectly* holy. This second assertion becomes not only probable, when the first is established: but it becomes absolutely certain. As man is constituted at present, the vices of the heart never fail to darken the dictates of reason, although they never entirely extinguish them: in those whose heart is depraved, reason is never pure, and, of course, perfect virtue is inseparable from perfect reason, and no one can be wise with that complete and absolute wisdom to which nothing is wanting, without being at the same time holy, with that holiness without spot, which leaves nothing to be desired. A man that is not perfectly holy, could not even have an idea of perfect sanctity: such a man can neither form to himself, nor, of course, present to others an image of virtue that will portray it, such as it is, and that will bear all its features.

CLXV. The passions and the vices which corrupt the will of men, (especially pride,) always pervert reason and impress it with false ideas in matter of morality. It is from the passions that moral errors, private and public, spring. It is the passions which, at all times and among all nations, have begotten those monstrous prejudices which change vice into virtue and virtue into vice, and reduce men to the painful necessity either of being wicked or dishonouring themselves. For men always wish to be able to think themselves good, and by a necessary consequence of this sentiment, they strive to transform into a virtue the vice that pleases them.

Let a vicious man undertake to paint virtue, whatever may be his genius, his vices, without his being aware of it, will guide his pencil and throw on the picture such traits as will disfigure it. This is what has happened to those ancient philosophers, whom pagan antiquity has so much eulogized and

raised to the very skies. The Socrates, the Platos, the Aristotles, the Tullies, the Senecas: all have missed the portrait of virtue, all have disfigured it: their pictures are full of beauties and full of spots. Beside the traits which reason has given, are seen the traits which passion and prejudice have furnished, they are monsters. What has happened to the philosophers of pagan antiquity, has happened likewise to the philosophers of our days. Why could these great geniuses never succeed in making a likeness perfectly resembling virtue and sanctity? It is because it was not in them. Jesus Christ had the true idea of perfect sanctity; he, therefore, possessed perfect sanctity: his reason was never darkened by any cloud, his heart was never troubled by any passion. He was *perfectly* wise, he was, therefore, *perfectly* holy: he knew how to paint virtue with all the traits that characterize it; it is therefore from within *himself* he has taken the idea of it.

But, after all, it is not by reasonings, but by facts, that we are to judge of the Sanctity of Jesus Christ; it is from his actions we must form his portrait. He, himself, must furnish the features which characterize him; and to enable mankind to judge what he is, he himself must be exhibited. Let us, then take up the Gospel, and study Jesus Christ.

CLXVI. First, no sooner does Jesus Christ show himself, than we are struck, and, as it were, dazzled with his sanctity. First, we see shine forth in him those primary virtues, which are, as it were, the foundation of all sanctity; I mean, of the love of God, and of that of our fellow men. What a profound respect for God, whom he always styles his Father! What a dependence on his will! What a zeal for his glory! What an immense desire to make him known, and to procure him adorers! No man has ever loved men with a love so pure, so sincere, so disinterested, as he did. Can we imagine any thing comparable to the zeal with which he instructed them? to the patience which he displayed towards them? The innocency of his manners, his moderation, his disengagement, his aversion for all that savours of pomp and vain glory, equalled his other virtues. He never possessed any earthly

good; never arrogated to himself any authority; he refused a crown. He was repeatedly seen to be touched, even unto tears, at the miseries of men. He was never seen to laugh: at times he rested himself: never took any pleasure. Never was any appearance in his outward comportment, that could betray a man that wished himself to be taken notice of.

CLXVII. Next, figure to yourself a man, who displays in his air and in all his manners a noble simplicity, and a certain sweet dignity, which is not perceivable, but when he is viewed nigh; who is modest without affectation; grave without haughtiness; discreet and reserved without constraint; affable and popular without servility; equally incapable of flattering men and offending them; always ready to do good to them; and never availing himself against them of the good which he has done them. It is under these traits, the first coup d'oeil, we have of him, depicts him to our minds.

CLXVIII. Thirdly, but when we come to examine him with more attention, and to study him with more care, we discover in him such great things, that our minds are amazed at them. Not only are we unable to discover in him any vice, but we cannot even discover any of those defects of character, from which no man is exempt; none of those first emotions, which in all men at times prevent reason, and show that their virtue is not sufficiently on its guard; that it does not always watch, and that it suffers itself, at times, to be surprised.

Fourthly, the beauty and purity of heart of this venerable man, the greatness and elevation of his soul, are felt in all that he says, and all that he does. One sees that the sublimity of virtue is his natural state, and that he does not stand in need, like other men, to recollect himself, and to struggle against the passions, to practise, on the most difficult occasions, the most heroic virtue: that he is wise without study; temperate, patient, free, and intrepid: without effort all in him is in a just proportion, all is in the true mean which reason points out, and which nobody can hit. He is never seen, as happens with other men, to throw himself into one extreme, to avoid another. All that he has said, is exactly what he

ought to have said; and all that he has done, is precisely wha he ought to have done. Never is he found in fault; all in him flows from the heart. It is not possible to imagine a virtue more true, more frank, more free, more independent, more above all prejudice and all human consideration, all fear, all hope, all interest of whatever kind. When he defies the Jews to convict him of sin, we are forced to believe him; for he has already convinced us that he is impeccable.

Such are the general characteristics of the Sanctity of Jesus Christ, justified by the narration of the Evangelists.

CLXIX. I shall now take notice of some particular traits. I observe, in the first place, that Jesus Christ has given to men established in dignity, to kings and to their ministers, to the priests and the great men of the world, all that was due to the character with which they were invested: but, I observe, at the same time, that he has never given them more. I observe moreover, that he has never given any praise either to talents or to greatness, or to riches; and that he has praised virtue only. I perceive, in fine, that by his whole conduct he gave clearly to understand, that, what he esteemed and honoured in men, is man himself, and the dignity of human nature; and I know, that of all virtues this is the rarest.

CLXX. Next, in examining the miracles of Jesus Christ, I find that he has never wrought any but such as are worthy of a God-man. No miracles of punishment. His power was the instrument of his bounty. That he has never wrought miracles, but from such motives as were worthy of a God-man. It was always to succour the distressed, to glorify his heavenly Father, to evince the divinity of his mission. Never did any human motive enter into his divine actions.

The Pharisees, with an imperious tone demand, that he would let them see a wonder from heaven.* It is a challenge which they give him. They mean to tempt him, and put his power to the test. It is, therefore, pride that demanded this prodigy: one might have thought, of course, that pride would have done it: and Jesus refuses it.

* Math. xvi. 1.

His disciples, filled with indignation against the city of Samaria, which had refused to receive him, wish him to cause the fire of heaven to come down upon the ungrateful city.* It was vengeance that solicited this miracle; one might, then, have believed, that vengeance would work it. Jesus Christ rejects, with indignation, the prayer of his disciples, and answers them, "You know not of what spirit you are; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men, but to save them."

When Jesus Christ was brought before Herod, Herod had great joy. He, for a long time, had wished to know him, and to see him work a miracle. It was the mere curiosity of a king, that prompted Herod to wish for this miracle. Jesus Christ did not gratify it; he did not work the miracle which Herod wished to see, but he wrought another. He wished rather to pass for a crazy man, than for a flatterer; and he taught by this example the Ministers of his Gospel, that they are not to use the talents which they have received from heaven, but for the instruction and the conversion of kings, and never for their amusement.

CLXXI. It has been said, that virtue is not heroic, but when it unites the *two extremes* of opposite virtues, as *extreme* justice, and *extreme* bounty. This observation is true. Nothing is so difficult to men, as to unite these two *extremes*. Men almost never possess a virtue in an eminent degree, but at the expense of the opposite virtue. He that is very good, is ordinarily weak: he that is very just, is ordinarily severe: he that is very prudent, is generally slow and timid, &c.

Jesus Christ is the only man that has united all *extremes* of opposite virtues. Of this, the Gospel furnishes us a thousand examples, the greatness of which cannot escape a reflecting reader.

CLXXII. Do you wish for examples of *extreme* goodness, of *extreme* meekness, of *extreme* humanity? Represent to yourself Jesus Christ presiding over the judgment of the adulterous woman:‡ conversing with the Samaritan woman, sitting on the well of Jacob:§ making, in the house of Simon

*Luke ix. † Luke xxiii. ‡ John viii. § John iv.

to the Pharisee an apology of the most abandoned woman in the city:* inviting himself to Zaccheus,† &c. Call to your mind all that he has said and done on these occasions. Does not all the charity, which we are capable of conceiving in a God made man to save men, strike your eyes? Can there be any thing greater and more affecting? Do you not, at these traits, recognise the good Shepherd,‡ and the Father of the prodigal Son? § Are you not obliged to confess, that Jesus Christ has depicted himself in these two parables?

CLXXIII. Do you want examples of *extreme* force and *extreme* liberty? Figure to yourself the noble intrepidity, with which Jesus Christ rose up so often against the Scribes and the Pharisees, reproached them to their faces with their hypocrisy, their secret disorders, the sacrilegious abuse which they made of all that is most holy in religion, with the impious rashness with which they destroyed the law by the interpretations which they gave to it. Are not these illustrious traits of an intrepid zeal, which no human consideration can arrest or weaken?

It is worthy of notice, first, that the sinners, whom Jesus Christ treated with so much charity, had it not in their power, humanly speaking, to do any thing either for him or against him; and that those against whom he rose up with so much vigour, could, humanly speaking, do every thing for him or against him: they were men in power, and of credit: they moved every thing at their pleasure; all trembled before them. They were the masters of the reputation and life of Jesus Christ. They could at their pleasure cause him to be received as the Messiah, or cause him to be rejected as an impostor. Thus, Jesus Christ has risen up against disorders with an intrepid freedom, in those terrible conjunctures, when human respect reduces to silence even the most courageous, and causes them to forget all they owe to God. And he has shown nothing but charity and meekness, in those circumstances, when the greatest cowards show ordinarily haughtiness and

* Luke vii. † Luke xix. ‡ Matth. xviii. § Luke xv.

hard-heartedness, think only what they can do against men, and forget all that they owe to humanity.

It is not less remarkable, in the second place, that the sinners, to whom Jesus Christ has shown but kindness, were sinners of mere weakness, or at least penitent and humble sinners; and, of course, of that class, whom we would decide, he ought to pardon, if it were our province to give laws to his justice; and that the sinners to whom Jesus Christ has shown nothing but indignation, were all sinners of pure malice; men wicked upon principle and by system, capable of committing the greatest crimes, and of defending them openly; and, of course, such sinners as we would loudly pronounce God ought not to pardon, if it belonged to us to set limits to his mercy.

CLXXIV. But, in order to behold Supreme Virtue in all its brightness, we must consider Jesus Christ *dying*. It is in his passion that this venerable man has shown all the beauty, all the strength, all the greatness of his soul. In vain would we search, in all histories, after one single man, whom we might compare to him. All that the world has most admired, is at an infinite distance beneath him. All virtue is eclipsed; all sanctity vanishes in the presence of his. No, it is not thus one suffers, it is not thus one dies, if he be no more than simply a man.

It is not my design here to present a full picture of the passion of Jesus Christ. All that I shall say of it, is comprised in these few words, which contain the four great characteristics which distinguish the virtue of Jesus Christ from all other virtue. He united an *extreme* freedom with an *extreme* abandonment of his cause; an *extreme* patience with an *extreme* dignity.

CLXXV. *Extreme liberty*. Behold how Jesus Christ speaks to the Jews, at the moment they are seizing his person in the garden of Gethsemane;—to the prince of the priests, who interrogates him about his doctrine and his disciples;—to that audacious officer, who gives him a blow;—to the prince of the priests again, who commands him in the name of the living God to declare whether he be the Messiah, the Son of

the blessed God;—to Pilate, in the interrogatory, which he undergoes before him. Represent to yourselves well the words of Jesus Christ, and the circumstances in which they were spoken. Figure to yourself another man in his place, and ask yourself whether it be possible for a man, who finds himself in such a terrible situation, to preserve so much presence of mind, so much tranquillity, so much intrepid liberty.

CLXXVI. *Extreme abandonment of his cause.* Socrates, who is considered as the greatest man, whom Religion had not formed—Socrates, unjustly accused, speaks to his judges, who were his enemies, with a freedom that astonished all ages. But, after all, it is to defend his innocence, that he speaks thus. Jesus Christ did not speak one word to defend his innocence. Were reasons wanting to him—to him, I say, whose life was so pure, whose doctrine was so holy, whose miracles were so renowned? Were words wanting? He was the most eloquent of men. Was it courage? But he came of himself to deliver himself into their hands: he durst declare to them that he was the Son of God, although he knew that, by this declaration, he was pronouncing the sentence of his death. It was, then, not through pusillanimity or despair, but from a pure greatness of soul, that he did not say one word in his own defence. He was satisfied with not avowing himself guilty, because he was innocent. He never said that he was innocent, because his heavenly Father would, that he should suffer himself to be condemned as guilty.

CLXXVII. *Extreme patience.* Exposed to so much injustice and violence, to so many black calumnies, atrocious insults, unheard-of outrages; smarting under such cruel torments, condemned to such an ignominious death, Jesus Christ is silent and dumb like a lamb before him who shears it. He is not seen to claim either the rights of justice, which were so openly violated in his regard; nor the respect due to human nature, which was so unworthily trampled upon. There escapes not a word of complaint or murmur, not one single sigh. Neither indignation, nor anger, nor contempt, nor any other passion is painted, either in his eyes, or his face, or his whole

comportment. He does not even seem to be moved: all in him is calm: one would say, that he is but the spectator of the evils he endures. And yet, who could behold such a spectacle without emotion? One would say, that, when he suffers the most cruel torments and basest treatments, he is in his natural state. This is already too much for a mere man, but it is not as yet enough for Jesus Christ: He prays for his persecutors, he begs pardon for them, he exculpates them.

CLXXVIII. *Extreme dignity*, in that very silence of Jesus Christ. O, what greatness is there in this silence! How eloquent it is! What does it not say to those who are capable of understanding it? This venerable silence is the triumph of Jesus Christ. It is by this silence especially, that his virtue showed itself above all other virtue.

The apology, which Socrates made for himself, before his judges; all that he said to his friends, before he took the fatal draught, respecting submission to the laws, the contempt of life, the immortality of the soul; all this depicts to me a great man. The silence of Jesus Christ paints to me a man above man himself. I see, by the beautiful speeches of Socrates, that he wished to appear constant and resolute: I see, by the silence of Jesus Christ, that he would *be so*. I see, by the interesting discourse of Socrates, that, when he could not save his life, he would, at least, secure his reputation: I see, by the silence of Jesus Christ, that his virtue was above the loss of life, and above that of reputation. I see, by the beauful speeches of Socrates, that, not being able to make his judges just, he, at least, would render them odious: I see, by the silence of Jesus Christ, that, not being able to make his judges just, he thought on nothing, but suffering their injustice patiently. One single word, which Jesus Christ would have said in behalf of his innocence, would have diminished in me the idea of his virtue. His silence fills, in all its extent, the whole idea, which I can form to myself of virtue, and even surpasses that idea. The silence of Jesus Christ is, therefore, sublime; and this admirable man was not only extremely patient, but he was so, moreover, with *extreme dignity*.

In beholding Jesus Christ, such as I represent him to myself, in perusing the Bible, my reader, I doubt not, will find him still greater; and I feel bold to affirm, that if he find many new traits to add to the picture, which I have made of him, he will not find any to strike out.

CLXXIX. He will be compelled to confess, that Jesus Christ was exempt, not only from all vice, but, moreover, from all defect, and from all weakness. That he had all virtues, that he had them in an eminent degree; that he has left far behind him, at an infinite distance, all great men, that have preceded him, and that have followed him. That he had the character of sanctity, which properly became a God-man; insomuch that, if it be true, that God would become man, he ought to have been such as Jesus Christ has been; that it is in him we must look for true sanctity: that he is the model of all men, in whatever condition they be, and in whatever situation they are found: proportioned to all; above all; whom all can imitate, and none can equal: that he resembles those masterpieces of architecture, painting, and sculpture, which can be compared to nothing, because they are above every thing; and with which, all other works are compared, in order to judge of their beauty, according as they approach them more or less; that no particular virtue constituted the character of Jesus Christ, because he possessed them all in the same degree, which is the supreme degree, that he cannot be defined by any particular virtue, as we are used to define almost all great men; that his definition must present the idea of all virtues, and that his name is *The Holy*, or the Saint of Saints.*

* The divine character of Jesus Christ, does not, in order to be felt, stand in need of foreign recommendations. It recommends itself by its own unmeasurable greatness and elevation; and in order to be struck with admiration of it, it is enough to view it. Still it will not a little assist our weakness, when we behold the enrapturing impression, which it made on the strongest and most comprehensive minds, of past ages as well as of the present. But that adorable character appears in all its lustre, when we behold sophistic impiety itself enraptured at the beauty, the greatness, the wisdom, and sanctity of this adorable God-man. Yes, the very conspirators against the Son of God, could not re-

CHAPTER II.

On the Beauty, Excellency, and Sanctity of the Law of Jesus Christ.

PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS.

CLXXX. From what has been said of the wisdom and sanctity of Jesus Christ, our reader is, no doubt, disposed to listen with a lively interest to what still remains to be said respecting the beauty, excellency, and sanctity of his holy law. He will expect nothing from this venerable man but what is wor-

frain from paying their tribute of admiration and respect to this divine personage, whenever they viewed it in the silence of their passions.

"I must confess," says the too-much renowned J. J. Rousseau, "that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me; the sanctity of the Gospel speaks to my heart. Behold the books of the philosophers, with all their poesys; how insignificant are they beside this! Is it possible, that a book at once so sublime and so simple, is the work of men? Is it possible, that he, whose history it furnishes, is himself but a man? Is this the language of an enthusiast, or of an ambitious sectarian? What meekness, what purity in his manners! What moving grace in his instructions! What elevation in his maxims! What deep wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what wit, and what justness in his answers! Where is the man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato is pourtraying his imaginary Just, covered with all the opprobriums of crime, and worthy all the rewards of virtue, he is painting trait for trait, Jesus Christ. The likeness is so striking, that all the fathers of the church have felt it, and that it is not possible to be mistaken. What prejudices, what blindness must not one possess to dare to compare the Son of Sophronicus to the Son of Mary? Socrates, dying without pain, without ignominy, easily maintains to the end his personage; and if this easy kind of death had not reflected honour on his life, one would doubt, whether Socrates, with all his wit, was any thing more than a sophist. He invented, they say, morality. Others before him, had put it in practice; he said no more than what they had said; he did no more than to reduce their examples into lessons. Aristides was just, before Socrates had said what justice is. Leonidas had died for his country, before Socrates had made it a duty to love one's native country. Sparta was sober, before Socrates had recommended sobriety. Before he had defined virtue, Greece had already abounded in virtuous men. But where did Jesus Christ take among his own that elevated and pure morality, of which he only has given both the lessons and the example? From the midst of the most furious fanaticism, the highest wisdom caused itself to be heard; and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues

thy of him; and, indeed, what man was ever more capable of giving to mankind just and truly useful laws than he, in whom we have seen shine forth sovereign reason? What man ever deserved so much that mankind should submit to his laws, as he in whom sovereign sanctity shone in all its brightness. I venture to say, that if mankind did not perfectly know all the beauty and all the usefulness of the laws of Jesus Christ, still they ought to receive them only from a sense of respect for their Author; and still these laws are so beautiful and so useful, that men, were they even unacquainted with their Author, ought, with common accord, to submit to them only on account of their beauty and utility.

Yes, whoever has on the one side, a thorough knowledge of the nature of man, of his faculties, his inclinations, his wants; and, on the other of the relations which men have with God, and of those which they have with each other, and, in fine, if I may express myself thus, of the relations which every man has with himself; whoever shall know well, I say, all these circumstances of nature, and of the condition of men, will be forced to acknowledge, that the law of Jesus Christ

honoured the basest of all nations.* The death of Socrates, quietly philosophizing with his friends, is the mildest that one can wish for; that of Jesus Christ, expiring in torments, outraged and scorned, cursed by a whole people, is the most horrid that one can dread. Socrates, in taking the poisoned cup, blesses him who presents it to him, and who weeps: Jesus, in the midst of dreadful torments, prays for his enfuriate executioners. Yes, if the life and the death of Socrates be those of a sage, the life and the death of Jesus Christ are those of a God. Shall we say that the history of the Gospel was contrived at pleasure? Dear friend, it is not thus men invent; and the events respecting Socrates, of which no one doubts, are less attested than those which relate to Jesus Christ. In the main, this is only to shift the difficulty, not to destroy it; it would be more inconceivable that many men should have agreed to fabricate this book, than it would be that one man should have furnished the subject of it. Never would Jewish authors have found out, either this language or this morality; and the gospel has characteristics of truth, so great so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that the inventor of it would be still more astonishing than its hero." *Emile, Tom.* iii, *page* 179.

* We are far from approving in all its extent, the horrid idea which this author gives here of the Jewish nation.

answers them with such justness, and brings man into such perfect order relatively to all those circumstances, that it was not possible for God himself to conceive a plan of a wiser, a more beautiful, and a more accomplished legislation. Thence he will necessarily conclude, either that Jesus Christ was God, or at least (what suffices us for the moment) that he was filled with the spirit of God. Let us enter upon an examination of this law.

CLXXXI. Man is a being composed of an organized body, and of a spiritual and immortal soul, which is closely united to the body to govern it, or if you please that I should make use of the definition universally received, man is a rational animal. Man is endowed with reason, is capable of knowing the truth, and of making the discernment of good and evil; and, in that same capacity he is moreover free, that is to say, he is master of his own determinations and of his own choice, and has particularly the power of embracing what is good and of reflecting what is evil, or of attaching himself to what is evil and of rejecting what is good. Behold the nature of man.

Man holds his existence from another; he does not exist of himself. It is God, that is to say, the eternal Being, the Being infinite in all perfections that created him or made him out of nothing, both as to body and to soul. Behold the principle, the origin of man.

God created man for his own glory and for the happiness of man himself, or what is tantamount, God made man to know him, to love him, and to serve him in this world, and to possess him in the next. Behold the end of man.

In fine, God made man to live upon earth in society with his fellow-creatures. It is in order to render this society more necessary, more intimate, and more pleasant, that he caused all men to be born of one, insomuch that they are all brethren and compose but one and the same family, spread all over the surface of the earth. Behold the temporal state of man.

Here I easily conceive two things, and the reflecting reader,

I doubt not, will conceive them as I do: the first is, that it was necessary that God should give a law to man; the second is, that this law was necessarily to have a reference to the four circumstances of the condition of man, which I have just stated. I mean that this law was to be worthy of its Author, proportionate to the nature of man, conformable to his end and suitable to his state; or, to express the same ideas in other terms, this law was to bring man into order with regard to God, with regard to himself, and with regard to his fellow men. But it is self-evident, that man could not be in order with regard to God, but by loving him as God; with regard to himself, but by loving himself as a rational being, created to serve God in this world, and to enjoy him in the next; with regard to his fellow-men, but by loving them under the same relations under which he loves himself. Whence it results that all divine legislation must necessarily consist in prescribing and regulating these three loves which in reality are but one love.

These principles once established, I maintain that the law of Jesus Christ fulfils these three objects after the most perfect manner.

The love which this law commands us to have for God, is truly worthy of that Supreme Being. This law regulates, after the wisest manner, the love which every man is to have for himself. The love which this law prescribes to every man towards his fellow-men, is perfectly proportionate to the bonds and relations which men have between themselves.

In fine, this law points out to men the surest means to preserve and to perfect in themselves those three loves. This we shall make appear in several distinct articles.

ARTICLE I.

Which goes to show that the law of Jesus Christ reduces itself to the three loves, of which we have just now spoken.

CLXXXII. We find in the gospel of St. Matthew, xxii. 3. that a teacher of the law, having proposed to Jesus Christ this

question: "Master, which is the great commandment of the law? Jesus Christ answered him, this is the first of all commandments. Hear, Israel, the Lord thy God is the only God, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength: this is the first commandment; here is the second which is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than these. The whole law and prophets are comprised in these two commandments."

Here we have the three loves of which we have spoken above, clearly pointed out in the law which God formerly gave to the Jews, and which Jesus Christ here adopts and publishes again as these two first commandments. These three loves are, according Jesus Christ, the basis, and, as it were, the substance of all religion. The second commandment, which is the love of ourselves, is not expressly commanded, not only because it is impossible to love God without loving one's self, or to love one's self with a well regulated love without loving God; but, moreover, because the love of ourselves being a necessary love that is born with us, and of which we cannot divest ourselves, there was no need for prescribing, but only for regulating it. The third love that of our neighbour, is expressly commanded; because, although it be very true that we cannot love God if we do not love men, who are made to the image of God, and who are our brethren; still, if God had not declared that these two loves are inseparable, the generality of men, blinded by passion, might have persuaded themselves on a thousand occasions, that they might separate them, and love God with all their heart, whilst they mortally hate their neighbour. In fine, the second commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," does not mean that we owe to our fellow-men an equal love, but only a love similar to that which we have for ourselves: for order will have it that we should prefer ourselves to our fellow-men, at least, in the case of an equality of interests.

Such is the substance and main point of the law of Jesus Christ, that is to say, it consists in commanding and regulating the three loves above stated, viz. the love of God, the love of ourselves, and the love of our fellow-men.

ARTICLE II.

Characteristics of the Love of God, according to the Law of Jesus Christ.

CLXXXIII. The love which Jesus Christ commands men to have for God answers the idea, which both reason and faith give us of the supreme excellency of that first Being, and of the relations which we have with him. "Hearken, Israel, the Lord thy God is the only God, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." "Thou shalt love the Lord." Man is to love God first and principally for himself, and because he is God, that is to say, on account of the infinite excellency of his being, or, in other words, because he is infinitely good and amiable in himself. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." Man is to love God, because he is *his* God, that is to say, because God has made him; because he has filled him with good, because God is the good which he is to enjoy to all eternity. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, *with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul.*" Man is to consecrate himself *entirely* to the love of God. This love is to be in him a predominant love, which should prevail over all other love, and which should reign over all his faculties, in so much that God should be above all in the estimation and in the affection of man. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God *with all thy strength.*" Man is to love God with an active love, with a love that manifests itself outwardly and that produces fruits by good works. Man will then refer to God all that he has, all that he is, and all that he does. He will be faithful to his law, subject to the orders of his providence, docile to his inspirations, always ready to undertake all, and to sacrifice all for his sake.

CLXXXIV. The love which man owes to God, is a love worthy of that Supreme Being. It is, therefore, a love, by which he loves God for God himself, if not only and exclusively, at least in the first place and principally. Whence it follows that that love ought to be a noble and generous love, a love which does not depend at all on the advantages of fortune, and which ought to maintain itself in the most universal privation as well as in abundance; a love which makes the christian always ready to receive with a grateful submission from the hand of God, poverty and riches, prosperity and adversity.

CLXXXV. The love which man owes to God, is a love worthy of that Supreme Being; and, of course, a firm, constant, and unshaken love, a love capable of bearing up against the most troubled trials. This is the idea which Jesus Christ gives of it in these words. (St. Luke, xiv. 26.) "If any one come to me, and doth not hate his father and mother, his wife, his children, his brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple."

CLXXXVI. The love which man owes to God, is a love worthy of that Supreme Being; and, by a necessary consequence, a love of zeal. He that has this love in his heart, must be animated with a holy passion for the glory of God. His great interest in this world is that of God. The only end of his labours and his good works, will be to procure the glory of God. He will make all his happiness to consist, if necessary, in being the victim of his faithfulness to God. This is what Jesus Christ teaches us by these words. (Math. v. 16.) "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." And by these, (Math. v. 11.) "Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, because your reward is very great in heaven.

CLXXXVII. In fine, that love which man owes to God, is a love worthy of that Supreme Being; and, of course, one of the necessary effects of this love, is to inspire man with a so-

vereign horror of sin: this horror will always produce in the christian, either a lively fear to commit sin, or a bitter regret for having committed it, and will engage him to watch unremittingly over himself, and to use continual violence to preserve himself from sin, or to embrace the holy austerities of penance to expiate it. The gospel is full of these truths.

Such are the characteristics of the love which man owes to God, according to the law of Jesus Christ. If the christian philosopher avows with me that God could not exact more from man his creature, he will likewise grant, that man owes nothing less to God his creator. It is by this love which springs from faith, and which is inseparable from hope, that we "adore God in spirit and in truth," and that we pay to him that interior worship which is the only one he approves, because the only one that is worthy of him: *interior worship*, however, which does not exclude the outward, as this as necessarily proceeds from the inward, as the speech, the gesture, and the different motions of the head and of the body proceed from inward thought and sentiment; but notwithstanding this it is inward worship only, that can give worth to acts of the outward worship, which when not proceeding from the interior religious feelings, is in the eyes of God nothing more than dissimulation, which outrages him.

ARTICLE III.

Characteristics of the love which man owes to himself, conformably to the Law of Jesus Christ.

CLXXXVIII. Man is determined, by his very nature, to love himself; it is therefore impossible that he should not love himself: but this love may be conformable to order or the reverse. When the love which man has for himself, is in order, so far from its being opposed to the love of God, it is rather an act, and, as it were, a part of that love. But when the love which man has for himself, is inordinate, it becomes, in the

heart of man, the rival and the greatest enemy of the love of God. It was, therefore, all-important for man to know how to regulate that love which he has for himself, and this is what Jesus Christ has taught him in a manner truly worthy of so great a Master.

After all that has been said hitherto, it is self-evident that the love, which man has for himself, cannot be in order, but as far as it is conformable to the *nature of man*, to the *end of man*, to the *state or condition of man upon earth*. We want but good sense to acknowledge the truth of these principles.

CLXXXIX. First, man, as we have said above, is composed of a spiritual and immortal soul, and of an organized body. As to his soul, he is the image of God; but as to his body, he differs but little from the brute. It is, therefore, the soul that keeps the first rank in man, the body has but the second. Now order, it will not be questioned, requires it that man should chiefly esteem and love in himself what is more excellent. Let his first care, therefore, be unremittingly to preserve and to perfect in his soul the divine resemblance: by what means? By the study and practice of wisdom. Let him be persuaded that he has no greater interest in this world than that of being faithful to God; upright, just, benevolent, moderate, &c. in a word, as good as he can be, and that in this his true glory and happiness consist. This is what Jesus Christ commands us in these words: "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."* Let man, however, love his body, but let him love it as subordinate to the soul; let him love it, if I am allowed the expression, but save the rights and the dignity of the soul. Let man preserve his body, but as an instrument which God has given to the soul for the exercise of virtue. Let him, therefore, much more fear to degrade his soul than to hurt his body. Let him even always be ready to deliver up his body to torments and to death, rather than to contaminate his soul with any crime. It is to make us understand this truth, that Jesus Christ commands us to have the

* Math. v. 48.

prudence of the serpent.* This reptile, being attacked, exposes his whole body to the blows, in order to save the head. It is after the same manner that man ought to make no account of the life of his body when he cannot preserve it but by forfeiting the purity of his soul.† It is thus that man ought, according to the law of Jesus Christ, to love himself relatively to *his nature*.

CLXL. Next, man is made to serve God upon earth, and to possess him eternally in heaven. It is but by serving God and by serving him faithfully upon earth, that man can merit to possess God in heaven. These two things are absolutely inseparable. None shall possess God in heaven, but he who shall have served him faithfully upon earth. Whosoever shall have served God with fidelity upon earth, shall enjoy him in heaven.‡ And here we must observe, that those that are rebels to God upon earth, shall not only be deprived of the recompense due to virtue, but shall moreover be punished with all those chastisements which the crime deserves. The gospel abounds with these truths, truths so consoling for the righteous, and so terrible for the wicked.§

Penetrated with these truths, the christian will conclude with

* Math. x. 16.

† "He that loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." Math. x. 37.

"And if thy hand or thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to enter into life maimed or lame, than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire." Math. xviii. 8.

"He that takes not up his cross and followeth me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life, shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it." Math. x. 38, 39.

‡ "Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee the crown of life." Apocal. ii. 10.

"He that shall persevere unto the end, shall be saved." Math. x. 22.

§ "Then shall he say to them also that shall be on his left hand: depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels."

"And these (the wicked) shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting." Math. xxv. 41. 46.

"Who shall suffer eternal pains in destruction, from the face of the Lord, and

Jesus Christ, that, therefore, it avails man nothing to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul; and from that moment, all his desires are directed towards heaven; he will occupy himself but with heaven; he will know no other good but virtue and the good works by which heaven is merited; no other evil than sin by which heaven is lost. He will ever be in the disposition to lose all his goods and to suffer all the evils of this world rather than to commit one mortal sin, which excludes him from heaven. It is to make his disciples feel all the force of these obligations that Jesus Christ said to them, "lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth; where the rust and the moth doth consume, and where thieves dig through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither the rust nor the moth does consume, and where thieves do not dig through and steal."* "If thy right eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is better for thee that one of thy members should perish, than that thy whole body should go into hell."†

And if thy right hand cause thee to offend, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is better for thee that one of thy members should perish than that thy whole body should go into hell." (Luke xii. 4.) "And I say to you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you shall fear: fear ye him who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear him."‡ It is after this manner that man ought, in conformity with the law of Jesus Christ, to love himself with regard to his *end*.

CLXLI. Thirdly. In fine, man is created to live upon earth

from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints." II. Thess. i. 9, 10.

"It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that cannot be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished." Mark ix. 42, 43. Math. iii. 12. Luke iii. 17.

"Then shall the King say unto them that shall be on his right hand: come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Math. xxv. 34.

* Math. vi. 19. † Math. v. 29. ‡ Luke xii. 4, 5.

in society with his fellow men: every man is, therefore, with regard to society, what a member is with regard to the body, and the society is, with regard to every man, what the body is with regard to one single member. Hence it results, that every man has a right to prefer his own temporal interest to the temporal interest of each one of his fellow-men, at least, in the case of an equality of interest; and that he is bound to prefer the general temporal interest of the society to his own personal interest in the same order. And this is what Jesus Christ commands us by these words: "Give to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar," for, by *Cæsar*, in this place, we must understand him or those who represent the societies, and exercise power in their names, according to the different constitutions of these societies, the kings in monarchies, the magistrates in republics, the grandees in aristocracies.

CLXLII. But man never owes the sacrifice of his eternal salvation, either to the temporal welfare of individuals, or to that of the society, because the salvation of one single man is infinitely above all the temporal goods of the whole society of man; because salvation is not in the order of those goods which belong to the civil society of man; in fine, because man can never make the sacrifice of his salvation, but by violating some point of the law of God; and it is self-evident, from plain good sense, that it is never lawful to do evil, in order that good may ensue; because, in fine, the first duty of man is to obey God, insomuch, that if a man were able, by one single sin, to prevent the destruction of all mankind, he ought not to commit it. Whence it follows moreover, that man ought not to make the sacrifice of his eternal salvation, even to bring about the eternal salvation of all mankind. Which supposition, however, is manifestly chimerical.

CLXLIII. Still as men are not only united together by the ties of temporal society, but moreover by those of the spiritual society, and as they ought to love each other chiefly in relation to salvation and as future citizens of heaven, order demands, that every man, when there is need, sacrifice his own temporal interest, and even his own life, not only for the eternal sal-

vation of the society, but moreover for that of one single individual of his fellow-men: for it is evident, that the life of a man ought to be accounted for nothing in comparison with the salvation of another man. And this is what Jesus Christ has commanded us when he said, "The commandment which I give you, is that you love each other as I loved you." But Jesus Christ loved all men, and each of them in particular to such a degree as to die for their salvation.

ARTICLE IV.

Characteristics of the love which man owes to his fellow-creatures according to the law of Jesus Christ.

CLXLIV. We read in the tenth chapter of St. Luke that, after Jesus Christ had declared that the second commandment of the law was this; "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," the teacher of the law, who had first interrogated him, put further this question to him, "And who is my neighbour?" Jesus Christ answered him by that beautiful and ingenious parable of the charitable Samaritan, which is found in the same chapter, and the morality or natural consequence of which is, that every man ought to consider each one of his fellow-creatures as his neighbour. Thus, according to the law of Jesus Christ, every one is to love not only his parents, his relations, his friends, his benefactors, his fellow-citizens, but all men without exception, because there is none that was not created, as he himself is, to the image of God, none that was not redeemed, as he was, by the death of the Son of God. Every man, it is true, owes a predilection to those of his fellow-men, with whom, in the order of nature, in that of civil society, or in that of religion, he has more immediate and closer relations. But that predilection must not go so far as to exclude any of his fellow-creatures from his affection. It is on this account that Jesus Christ would have us pray each one in the name of all and for all, "*Our* Father who art in heaven, do we say

* John xv. 12.

by his order, hallowed be thy name. Give us this day our daily bread," &c.; and not *my* father who art in heaven. Every man is to love all and each one of his fellow-men, with a love of *justice*, in never doing them any kind of wrong; with a love of *charity* in doing them all the good he can. With regard to the love of justice, Jesus Christ renews the commandments of the decalogue which regard our neighbour. With respect to the love of charity, he commands every man to do to others all the good which he wishes that others should do to him; he makes an express commandment of giving alms-deeds, under the name of which we must understand all the temporal succours that man can afford his fellow-men.

CLXLV. But as every man is bound to love his fellow-creatures, *first* and *principally* in the order of salvation, as we have said above, every man is commanded to pray for his neighbour, to instruct him in the law of God, to make him, when he can in conformity with the rules of prudence, useful corrections, and to give him good examples. All these duties are set down in the gospel. Let man especially beware, lest he become for his brethren an occasion of scandal. "Woe to man by whom the scandal cometh; it were better that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Math xviii. 6, 7.

CLXLVI. In fine, the love which the law of Jesus Christ prescribes to every man toward his fellow-creatures, must be not only sincere and affectionate, active and officious, but it must be moreover patient and capable of supporting and pardoning the most cruel and the most multiplied injuries.*

* "This law respecting the forgiveness of all kinds of ill-treatment was so new and so absolutely unknown, till the Saviour of the world came to prescribe it and to enforce it by his example, that amidst the wisest nations the most rigid moralists represented the desire of revenge as the work of a noble heart, and revenge itself, when gratified, as the highest degree of human felicity.

"But how much more magnanimous, how much more noble, how much more beneficial to mankind is it to pardon? It is more *magnanimous*, because it requires the most generous and the most sublime sentiments to fulfil this precept. They only can render us capable of supporting the evil treatments, the insults,

"You have heard that it hath been said: thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be the children of your father who is in heaven: who maketh his sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust. For if you love those that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the Publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? Do not also the heathen the same? Be you, therefore, perfect as also your heavenly Father is perfect." Math. v. 43—43. And lest we might believe that the pardon of injuries is but a counsel and not a precept, he on the spot pronounced that beautiful parable which is read in St. Math. chap. xviii. and concludes it by these words; "So also shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."

and the follies of the wicked with patience, and to look upon them with pity rather than indignation. It is these sentiments only that can make us view these trials as being a portion of the sufferings which in this economy of preparation for a better life are allotted to us, and make us feel that our most glorious victory consists in 'returning good for evil.' 'The patient man is better than the victor: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh cities.' Prov. xvi. 32.

"The pardon of injuries is more *beneficial*, because it is the only means of putting an end to those wrongs without end, which are the ordinary consequences of vengeance; for every act of revenge is a new offence, which draws after it another one to serve as satisfaction; but were we to fulfil this salutary precept, 'love your enemies, do good to those that ill-treat you,' this persevering benevolence would touch the fiercest hearts, and we would have no longer enemies to pardon.

"How much superior is the character of a christian martyr, who, calm in the midst of torments, prays for his infuriated executioners, how much superior, I say, is this character to that of a pagan hero, who breathes only vengeance and destruction to those who have never done him any harm?

"Although this virtue is so sublime and so useful, still before the 'only begotten Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father,' came to promulgate his heavenly doctrine, it was not only not practised, but even looked upon as contemptible and disgraceful, and yet it is in fact the surest remedy for most of the evils of this life, and absolutely necessary for man, in order to be capable of enjoying the eternal joys of heaven." *L. Jenyns, Exam. of the intrinsic evidence of christianity*, page 105—109.

This is not all, for Jesus Christ has carried matters so far as to oblige us to renounce all pardon on the part of God, if we do not pardon our brethren, and make of it, before him, our authentic declaration, every time we pray, in saying, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." And in order that men may well know that nothing is permitted that might even remotely strike at the fraternal charity that is to reign among them, Jesus Christ ends his precepts with these words. (Math. v. 21.) "You have heard that it was said to them of old: thou shalt not kill. And whosoever shall kill, shall be guilty of the judgment. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be guilty of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be guilty of the council. And whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be guilty of hell fire. Therefore, if thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and there shalt remember that thy brother has any thing against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and first go to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

CLXLVII. These last precepts of Jesus Christ respecting the forgivness of injuries and the love of enemies, I confess, appear rather harsh, the desire of avenging ourselves is natural to all men, our passion is easily inflamed, and from an ill-fated prejudice we think we dishonour ourselves when we do not avenge ourselves. But if we study well the heart of man, we shall soon discover that nothing was so necessary for man as these precepts for their salvation as well as their temporal happiness; for we will reason thus with all true sages: It is impossible for men to be just in their revenge, and to put an exact proportion between the wrongs which they have received, and the reparations which they make to themselves. It was, therefore, necessary to forbid men to avenge themselves. It is impossible for men not to seek to revenge themselves of an injury received, unless they forgive it from the bottom of their heart; it was, therefore, necessary that men should be commanded to forgive from the bottom of their

heart the injuries, they have received. When we hate him from whom we have received an injury, we do not forgive him from the bottom of our heart; it was, therefore, necessary to command men to love their enemies. In fine, it is impossible to love any one without wishing him well, and doing him good when we can; it was necessary, therefore, that men should be commanded to do good to their enemies.

It is thus we are to love our fellow-creatures, according to the *law* of Jesus Christ.

Such is the law which Jesus Christ has given to men on the part of God, whose envoy he not only always styled himself, but also his own Son. Are we not compelled to admire its wisdom and equity? Must we not acknowledge, that God himself could not devise a plan of legislation more suitable to the *nature* of man, to his *last end*, to his *temporal condition?* And that it is truly thus that man ought to love his God, himself, and his fellow-creatures? That nothing could be worthier of God than to give to man such a law? That nothing can be worthier of man than to fulfil it? That man cannot be truly great but in fulfilling it, and that he shall be the greater in proportion as he fulfils it with more perfection?

But Jesus Christ did not content himself with teaching men how they were to love their God, how they were to love themselves, and in fine, how they were to love their fellow-men, but he has moreover taught the surest means to preserve and perfect these three loves in themselves; and this will make the subject of the fifth article.

ARTICLE V.

CLXLVIII. *In which are expounded the means which Jesus Christ has pointed out to men to preserve and to perfect in themselves the three kinds of love of which we have hitherto treated.*

Every one knows, alas! too well from his own experience, that in that part of the soul, which is called the inferior part, there arise at times sudden and violent motions, which prevent

the use of reason, and which are in us as so many fatal instincts which prompt us to evil. It is these sentiments which we designate by the name of passions. Now, among these passions there are four principal ones, from which all the others have their rise, viz. *pride*, *sensuality*, *covetousness*, and *anger*.

Pride in man is an inordinate love of one's own excellence. This love inspires man with an unjust esteem of himself, a vain complacency in himself, a foolish admiration of himself. This love causes man rashly to confide in himself, and to presume every thing of his own strength; it continually drives him on to raise himself above other men and to command, it prompts him to desire against order the approbation, the praises, the respect, and even the homage of other men.

Sensuality in man is an immoderate desire of the pleasures of the senses. This desire causes man to give himself up to effeminacy, to ease, to the excesses of the table, and to indulge himself in every unlawful, and even the most brutal, gratifications of the flesh.

Covetousness is a disorderly desire of riches. This passion springs from the two preceding, and assists them as it were in attaining their object; for it is by riches the proud man opens himself a road to honours, and the voluptuous purchases all kinds of pleasures.

Finally, *anger* in man is a violent emotion which prompts him to repel all that opposes itself to the desires, which these three passions make him conceive.

Any one that has but a slight tincture of history, must have convinced himself, that it is these four passions that have caused all the evils, of which the world has been hitherto the theatre, since it began to be inhabited; that they have polluted it with a thousand crimes and deluged it in torrents of blood; that they have spread waste and desolation on all sides, and made an infinity of wretches. These poisonous and baneful sources, in which all sins, all disorders, all the miseries of man originate, are thus expressed by St. John, 1st ep. ii. 16. "For all

that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the consupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life."

It was, therefore, supremely important for man to repress these passions which are so fatal to his innocence, to his rest, and to his salvation, and which always are sure to turn out his tyrants, unless he make them his slaves. The great science of man is to know the malignity of these passions; the great art of man is not to suffer himself to be surprised by these passions; the only happiness of man in this world is to make himself master of these passions. The great secret of salvation for man consists in struggling continually against these passions, and never to yield them the victory. O how much was the adorable God-man convinced of these truths! For if you examine his gospel with attention, you will find that his moral doctrine, properly speaking, has no other object but to teach men to know, to fear, and to curb these passions. Exhortations, parables, maxims, but above all precepts and counsels, all turn upon that.

CLXLIX. *Precepts of Jesus Christ respecting Pride.*

Pride is of all passions the most unjust and the most disastrous, and still it is that which is most natural to man: none is entirely exempt from it: of all passions it is the only one that every man hates and condemns in all other men, whilst he is sure always to approve it in himself.

To cure man of this passion, it was therefore necessary to make him acquainted with its injustice, and behold, how Jesus Christ sets about it.

First. He declares and proves to men, that they have nothing and that they can do nothing of themselves, unless God lend them his succour, either as author of nature or as author of grace.

"And which of you by thinking, can add to his stature one cubit?" Luke xii. 25. "You cannot make one hair of your head white or black," as if he were to say to them: O presumptuous mortals, who so rashly confide in your pretended

strength, what are you about? Can any one of you add but one cubit to his size? What do I say? Can any one of you change even the colour of one of his hairs? And how then could you give to your body one limb or one sense more? And if you cannot make the slightest alteration in your body, nor give it the least grace which it wants, how could you possibly alter your soul, either by enriching it with some new power, or by giving the powers which it possesses already, a greater extent, or the least degree of perfection? Such is the reasoning contained in the words of Jesus Christ, which I have just quoted, words which strike a terrible blow at human pride; but something more was wanted to overthrow that monster.

Man is free, and he knows that he is so, he knows it because he feels it. On that ground man persuades himself that he stands in need but of himself to be good, as he has no need but of himself to be wicked; that he owes virtue but to himself, and holds it but from himself; that it is as easy for him to rise as to fall, and to pass from vice to virtue, as from virtue to vice. It is a mistake in man to think thus, and this error is the more fatal to him that it is the more agreeable and the more flattering. Jesus Christ undeceives him by these words, which we can never sufficiently meditate upon. (St. John xv. 4.) "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine; so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing," that is to say, nothing conducive to salvation, nothing meritorious of everlasting life, nothing great, nothing little, nothing at all, as St. Augustin remarks, for he who says nothing, excludes absolutely all. And in chap. viii. 31, 32, of the same gospel, we see that Jesus Christ after having uttered these words: "If you continue in my word, you shall be my disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," observing that the Jews were murmuring against him as if he had treated them like slaves, he answered, "Amen, Amen I say unto you: that whosoever com-

mitteth sin, is the servant of sin;" and he adds, "if, therefore, the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."

Men, therefore, cannot without the grace of Jesus Christ be delivered from the bondage of sin, nor practise any virtue, at least after a manner conducive to salvation; I say, after a manner conducive to salvation: for man can, without the help of grace, perform actions morally good; but besides that what he does in that state, avails nothing for heaven, what he can do in that line is very trifling, and that trifle even man owes to God as the author of nature much more than to himself.

It is thus Jesus Christ made known to mankind the injustice and folly of pride; for what can be more unjust and more silly than to draw vanity from what does not come from us, and does not belong to us?

And lest men should ever come to forget these great truths, Jesus Christ has obliged them to make to God every day a solemn avowal of their weakness, of their misery, of their extreme dependence, and of the need they have in all things of the all-powerful assistance of God. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven: give us this day our daily bread: forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us: and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." It is after this manner Jesus Christ has commanded all men to pray, kings as well as subjects, rich as well as poor, the righteous as well as sinners; those that are born with happy dispositions for virtue, as well as those that are born with fatal inclinations for vice. Man is then under an absolute impotency with regard to all those things which are the objects of this prayer, and he is bound to beg them of God as graces; and if man can do nothing of all this, what then can he do, and what is he?

What results from these principles, but that man ought to refer to God with an humble acknowledgment the glory of all the good that is in him, of all the usefulness he possesses, in fine, of all that is praise-worthy in him, and that he cannot appropriate to himself the smallest particle of that glory with-

out rendering himself guilty of usurpation? And hence the admirable precepts which Jesus Christ has given us in matter of humility.

The precepts to shun the praises of men, even the best deserved, and for that end, to conceal from their eyes all the good works which we practise, except those which ought necessarily to shine forth for the sake of public edification. "Take heed that you do not your justice before men, that you may be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward from your Father who is in heaven. Therefore, when thou doest an alms-deed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee. And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, who love to pray standing in the synagogues, and at the corners of the streets that they may be seen by men. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret: and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will reward thee. And when you fast, be not as the hypocrites, sad: for they disfigure their faces, that to men they may appear fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face, that thou appear not fasting to men, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret, will reward thee." Math. vi.1—16.

The precept to forsake all that savours of vain show and ostentation, the desire of striking the eyes of men, and of being taken notice of by them, of attracting their admiration and respect, of being distinguished and of being raised above others. "The Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All, therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do; but according to their works do ye not—for all their works they do for to be seen of men: for they make their

phylacteries broad, and enlarge their fringes. And they love the first places at feasts, and the first chairs in synagogues, and salutations in the market-place, and to be called by men, Rabbi. But be not you called Rabbi; for one is your master, and all you are brethren. He that is the greatest among you, shall be your servant." Math. xxiii. 3—11.

The precept for those whom providence (which has ordained that men should be governed by other men as well in civil as spiritual order,) has raised above others, to look upon themselves not as their masters, but as the ministers of God in their regard. What do I say? as their servants and their slaves: "you know that the princes of the gentiles over-rule them: and they that are the greater exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your master; and he who would be the first among you shall be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Math. xx. 25.

Finally, the precept given to man to stifle in his heart all sentiment of vain complacency in himself on account of the virtue which he possesses, or the good works which he has done: "when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth," and "when you shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say: we are unprofitable servants: we have done that which we ought to do." St. Luke xvii. 10. Such are the precepts of Jesus Christ with regard to humility, and these precepts are as many direct inferences from the principles which he had established on that matter, to wit: that all the good that is in man comes from God; and that man is nothing, has nothing, and can do nothing of himself, especially in the order of salvation and eternal life.

And in order to render men more attentive to these precepts and inspire them with courage to fulfil them, he solemnly declared to them that their salvation was attached to humility, and that the gates of heaven would be eternally shut against pride. "Amen, Amen, I say to you, unless you be converted and become like little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Math. xviii. 3.

And elsewhere, "he that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." Math. xxiii. 12. I remark that Jesus Christ has repeated these last words not less than three times, on three different occasions, and that in general there is no virtue which this God-man has so often and so strongly recommended as humility, and of which he has given us so many examples.

I am not surprised that Jesus Christ should have so much insisted on this point, and that he should have made it, if I am allowed the expression, his chief and capital affair to combat the pride of men, and to impress them with humility both by word and by example. I see that ever since there were men upon earth, pride has troubled and convulsed the world; there is nothing, therefore, but humility that can give it peace. I see that ever since there were men, pride has brought forth greater crimes than all the other passions taken together, and that perhaps there was never perpetrated any great crime, in which pride has not had its influence: there was nothing, therefore, but humility, that could cause all virtues to reign upon earth. I see, in fine, that it is pride that made all the reprobate, there was nothing, therefore, but humility that could produce the elect.

Such is the faithful statement of the doctrine of Jesus Christ respecting pride and the virtue opposite to that vice, which is humility. This doctrine comprehends truths, some of which Jesus Christ has revealed, and some others which he caused to be remarked, and precepts. The truths are the foundation of the precepts, the precepts are the necessary consequences of the truths.

At first sight, I must confess, my mind revolts against these truths; for I don't like to be told that I am nothing, that I have nothing, and that I can do nothing of myself; and still less that of myself I am wicked and depraved. Nevertheless, when I view myself with attention, and study myself thoroughly, I am compelled to acknowledge, that nothing is more certain than this, and that if, absolutely speaking, I can do some good by my natural strength alone, I cannot, most assuredly, make

myself entirely good. On the other hand, when I cast my eyes around myself, I see none thoroughly good but such as are humble of heart, that is to say, such as believe that virtue is a gift of God, such as ask it of God, and such, in fine, as refer it to God, and return to him all the glory of it. Lastly, I run over the whole pagan history without meeting with one single man who was humble, nay, who had even known humility; and I do not likewise find one single man who could be proposed as a model of virtues—I meet in the history of the Jews, and in that of the christians, myriads of men who were models of virtues, and there was not one among them that was not perfectly humble. I infer from these observations, that nothing was so necessary as the precepts of humility which Jesus Christ has given to mankind, and from these precepts being necessary to men, I conclude that it is, therefore, true, that men, of themselves, are but misery, weakness, ignorance, and corruption; for it is clear as noon-day, that, unless this were all true, God could not, without injustice, command men to be humble.*

* "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Math. v. 3. By this *poverty in spirit* we must understand a sweet, humble, docile disposition of mind, a disposition exempt from ambition, patient under injuries and free from resentment. This morality was so new and in such direct opposition to all the ideas of the pagan moralists, that they went so far as to pretend that this disposition of mind was criminal and worthy of sovereign contempt; for they considered this sentiment of humility as only proper to induce man to sacrifice the glory of his country and his own happiness to a degrading pusillanimity. It is still considered in this light by modern philosophers, nay, even by christians who possess of christianity nothing more than its empty name. We see the slightest affronts avenged by individuals upon individuals by premeditated murders upon a principle of honour. Nations which make profession of christianity exterminate each other by fire and sword, frequently for insignificant disputes or to maintain the balance of power between governments, or to gratify the ambition of princes who sit at the helm of the state. And what is still more to be lamented, these acts of ferocity are praised by the historian, celebrated by the poet, applauded on the theatre, approved of by tribunals, and even eulogized at times in the pulpit.

Still the nature of things cannot change, and error for its being universal cannot become truth. Man ought not to be proud nor ferocious, but humble, meek and patient. This *poverty in spirit* which Christ recommends, suits man on account

CC. *Precepts of Jesus Christ concerning Sensuality.*

The second passion, which it was necessary to check in man, is sensuality or in other words that natural bent, which prompts all men to seek the pleasures of the senses, and to make their felicity, or at least a great part of their felicity, consist in sensual gratifications: a violent passion which the first sight of the object so powerfully moves, which reflection influences more and more, and which the least recollection awakens; which confuses and darkens reason; which becomes a kind of fury and phrenzy, and which is so tyrannical, that man is scarce any longer his own master when he has once abandoned himself to it.

In order to engage mankind to resist this passion, the Son

of his dependence, and of his indigence which is so great that he has nothing as his own, and that he must needs receive all from God. It is only in proportion as he is possessed of this disposition of mind that he is capable of enjoying peace and tranquillity, and of heavenly felicity hereafter. Still this important precept remained entirely unknown until it was taught by him who says, "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come to me; for the kingdom of heaven is for such. Amen, I say to you, unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little one, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Math. xviii. 3, 4. *Jenyns Exam. of the intrinsic evidence of christianity. III. Prop. page* 102—105.

"The sentiment of our own weakness and imperfection is another precept, which the author of the christian religion *only* prescribes. This duty imposes on us the obligation of referring even our own virtues to the grace and favour of our God. This doctrine at first sight seems to be at variance with free will and to strip men of all merit; but when we come to examine matters attentively, we are convinced both from reason and experience, that it is incontestable, and that it leaves to the actions of men their freedom and their merit. The sentiments of humanity, of dependence in regard to God, and of resignation which this virtue produces, assign it a distinguished place among the most prominent moral virtues."

"And the virtue of humility far from being an effect of pusillanimity and weakness, as haughty philosophers have hitherto depicted it, is, on the contrary, the fruit of justice, of sound reason, and of genuine strength of mind. Still this precept was so altogether opposed to the arrogant and presumptuous principles of ancient philosophers as well as of our modern Deists, that we ought not to be surprised at it, when we find that it was utterly unknown before the Son of God appeared on earth to teach it, and to make it the very foundation of his admirable doctrine." *Ibid. III. Proposition, page* 126—128.

of God has declared, first "that the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and that the violent bear it away," that is to say, those that courageously resist the propensity of corrupt nature. Math. ii. 12. He exhorts us, Math. vii. 13. "To enter in at the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who enter by it." Next, Luke xxi. 34. he exhorts us "to take heed to ourselves lest perhaps our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness," and gives us by these words the rules of an exact temperance. To this precept he joins moreover that of penance, a precept which he addresses to all men without exception, how just soever they may be; but nevertheless a precept more rigorous for sinners than for the just, for those that have committed great crimes than for those that are guilty but of small sins. In fine, with a view of engraving deeper in our minds and our hearts those precepts, Jesus Christ represents in a most terrific parable the rich glutton condemned to the torments of hell for having spent his life in luxury and good cheer. Luke xvi.

Jesus Christ, in fine, gave the last stroke, if I may speak so, to this passion, in reducing men to the necessity of choosing between the state of marriage and absolute chastity by these words. Math. v. 28. "I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

CCI. *Precepts of Jesus Christ with regard to Covetousness.*

With regard to covetuousness, or what is tantamount, an inordinate desire and immoderate attachment to the goods of fortune, the reader, no doubt, has still present to his mind, what we have said of it in explaining the characteristics of the love of God. To which we must add these terrible words of Jesus Christ: "Woe to you rich who have your comfort in this world." Luke vi. 24. And, "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Luke xviii. 17. Which, according to the interpre-

tation of Jesus Christ, must be understood of those rich who place their confidence in their riches; and lastly, those words, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of of heaven."* Math. v.

With regard to anger, we have nothing to add to what we have said in explaining the characteristics of the love of our neighbour.†

* "This disengagement from the world and its frivolous and perishable goods is another duty which has not been prescribed but by the divine founder of the christian religion. This precept is so incontestably new, that even in our days there are but few of those who profess christianity that can be persuaded that it is a virtue, and that its practice is commanded. It does not, however, imply an actual sequestration from society, or actual renunciation of the occupations of this life or the goods of fortune, but only an inward disengagement from the latter, and a habitual disposition to sacrifice them in reality, whenever the cause of God or the eternal welfare of men require it. Such is the meaning of this sentence of Christ, 'No one can be my disciple unless he renounce all that he possesses.'

"This disengagement from the world could not make a component part of the pagan morality; for all their virtues were connected with the affairs and concerns of this life, and had no other object than celebrity or public good, but the great and noble perspective which the divine legislator of the christians holds forth, and which will be lost for ever unless we obtain it at present, is the *kingdom of heaven*, towards which we should incessantly direct our looks during all the time of our stay here below. But this is no obstacle to our temporal occupations, nor to the enjoyments of those reposes which travellers meet in their road, provided those things do not detain us too long, and cause us not to wander too far from our road. On the contrary, the thought of heaven towards which we are making our way, seasons all the pleasures which we find on our journey. The advantages and satisfactions of this world, viewed in relation to the good things of an hereafter, may affect our soul as preludes of a felicity more worthy of it, as a faint ray of the future glory. But if all our claims are confined to this sublunary happiness, and if these are to be the immovable boundaries of our felicity, I discover in it but an awful void, a perfidious happiness. It is the thought of our happy eternity, the thought of the immortality for which I exist, that embellishes the whole universe and imparts interest, grace, and life to every thing it contains. It is this grand thought that gives speech to the insensible beings, that interrupts the silence of the forests, that produces harmony in the murmurs of the rivulets, that enraptures at the sight of a flower, that exalts and ravishes the soul at the sounds of music, and that charms at the rural concert of the birds." *L. Jenyns Examen. of the intrinsic evidence of christianity. III. Prop. page* 128—132.

† "We cannot but observe, says the deep christian philosopher above quoted,

Such are the precepts which Jesus Christ has given to men to restrain in them the four principal passions; those passions, so powerful and so terrible that I may well call them here the four great springs which set the whole moral world into motion,

that the great author of christianity had in the duties which he prescribed, and in the end which he had in view, the design of overturning all the fundamental principles of the pagan virtues, and of establishing a religion directly contrary to all the false opinions which had been accredited and revered for the lapse of ages. The ancients ranked among their first virtues haughtiness, undaunted courage, implacable resentment,

"Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer."

The same poet paints still better the ancient heroes, so much exalted by prefane antiquity, in the following lines:

Hic petit excidiis urbem, miserosque penates,
Ut gemma bibat et serrano dormiat ostro.
Condit opes alius, defossoque incubat auro.
.... Gaudent perfusi sanguine fratrum. 2. Georg.

Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem.
Imposuit leges, fixit pretio atque refixit.
Hic Thalamum invasit natæ, vetitosque Hymeneos.
Ausi omnes immane nefas, ausoque potiti. Lib. vi. Æneid.

Such is the portrait of the most illustrious heroes of antiquity drawn by their best poets. The virtues of a christian are precisely the reverse. Poverty in spirit, meekness, patience, pardon of injuries are recommended to him at every page of the gospel.

The imperious, the ambitious, the bold man was praised and admired, as likewise he who by hardships and dangers had succeeded in hoarding up riches, which he afterwards squandered away in luxuries, in magnificence and debauchery; but all this is entirely opposite to the principles of christianity, which forbids all excessive eagerness for the acquirement of the goods of the world, all uneasiness about their preservation and the manner of enjoying them. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth. Be not solicitous saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? for after all these things do the heathens seek." Math. vi. 19, 31, 32.

The chief aim of the heathens was to render themselves immortal in the page of history. It was for this their poets sang, their heroes fought, their patriots died. Such were the motives which the pagan philosophers and legislators held forth in order to stimulate to great actions. Illusory motives if there were ever; for were even this reward worthy of our pursuit, who can be sure to obtain it? Of a hundred that are entiled to it, not one enjoys it. How many particular actions, Montague says, are buried in a battle? Of so many thousands of gallant men who have died sword in hand in France for these fifteen hundred years back,

which are the envenomed sources of all the crimes men perpetrate, and of all the evils they suffer, and which have hitherto banished from the world innocence and peace, and with them all true happiness. To these precepts so holy and so salutary, Jesus Christ has moreover added some counsels which may be reduced to the number of four, and of which I shall show the wisdom and usefulness after having explained them.

CCII. *Counsels of Jesus Christ.*

Against pride. Counsel of forsaking all honours and the glory of the world to embrace obscurity, humiliation and abjection. I find this counsel clearly expressed by the words of Christ, Luke xiv. 8. "When thou art invited to a wedding, sit not down in the highest place, but go and sit down in the lowest place." "Learn from me that I am meek and humble

there are not a hundred that have come to our knowledge. The remembrance not of the chiefs only, but also of the battles and of the victories themselves is buried in oblivion; do we imagine that at every firing of the gun or at every hazard we run, a clerk is suddenly at our side to register it? Hundreds of clerks, however, may set it down in writing, whose commentaries will not last three days, and will be seen by nobody. The judgment of posterity varies according to the predominant maxims of the age. The same man, the same action is successively eulogized and censured according as new ideas, new principles, new foundations of public esteem prevail. We have seen in our days the Constantines, the Theodosiuses, the Charlemagnes treated as rogues and fools; whilst praises were prostituted to the Sardanapals, the Julians, the Cromwels. What reliance after that can you make on the glory which men hold forth to virtue? But what says on this subject the christian legislator to his disciples? 'Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, because your reward is very great in heaven." Math. v. 11, 12.

The spirit of the pagan morality is so different from that of the Son of God, that I feel no difficulty to advance that the most boasted virtues of paganism are more incompatible with, and more opposite to the spirit and views of Jesus Christ than its very vices. Why? Because the false glory which accompanied those real crimes, considered by them as *virtues*, precluded every return to conscience and repentance; whilst on the other side the libertine and miscreant carries at least in his soul a monitor, which at times brings him back to his right senses, viz: the remorse which follows crime considered as *such*.

of heart and you shall find rest for your souls." Math. xi. 29. and John xiii. 12. "He said to them: know you what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord: and you say well, for so I am. If I, then, being Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

Against sensuality. Counsel to renounce marriage, to consecrate oneself to the state of absolute and perpetual continency. We find in St. Math. xix. 12. this counsel proposed in figurative and enigmatical, but at the same time very intelligible language. St. Paul has explained it likewise, 1 Cor. vii. 25. "Concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord; but I give counsel, as having obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful: I think, therefore, that it is good for a man so to be," and v. 38. "Therefore both he that gives his virgin in marriage, doeth well: and he that giveth her not, doeth better."

Against Covetousness or the love of Riches. Counsel to renounce all property and all possessions in this world, to live, conformably to the example of Jesus Christ, in a state of strict poverty. I find this counsel in the reply which Jesus Christ made to a young man, who after having assured him, that he had always faithfully observed the commandments of God, asked him what was still wanting to him, "If thou wilt be perfect," said our Lord to him, "go, sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have a treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me." Math. xix. 21.

Finally. *Against Anger.* Counsel not to defend ourselves against the violence and unjust undertakings of our fellow-creatures. "You have heard, Jesus Christ says, Math. v. 38, that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, not to resist evil, but if any man strike thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man will go to law with thee and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall force thee to go one mile, go with him other two."

CCIII. *Wisdom of the Counsels of Jesus Christ.*

At first sight, I must confess, the counsels of Jesus Christ appear to me not a little harsh and frightful. What, say I to myself, must I then, in order to be a christian, renounce all joy, all pleasure, all satisfaction, divest myself of the most natural feelings, cease to be a man, and die as it were before death?

Such are the first thoughts that strike my mind at the sight of the counsels of Jesus Christ. But when, after having hushed the murmur of pride and of the passions, I come to examine these counsels with coolness and with an entire impartiality, I discover in them the most profound wisdom, and I am forced to look upon them as the most beautiful part of the law of Jesus Christ.

For I observe first, that these four great means to combat the four principal passions, in order to acquire the perfection of the opposite virtues, are by no means commanded, but only counselled.

My second observation is that these counsels, even in the intention of Christ himself, are not designed but for a comparatively small number of persons. Why then, will you ask, did Christ give them? To answer this question, I examine first, what was the principal end which Christ proposed to himself in giving these counsels, and I see that it was to check more efficaciously the four passions of which we have spoken above. I then pass on to consider the genius of these passions, and I discover from what passes within me, from what takes place without me, and from what has happened in the world since it is inhabited by men, that these passions have two principal characteristics; they are at once seducing and tyrannical; they have an infinity of wiles, windings and subtleties to introduce themselves into the hearts of men, they have an infinity of means to maintain themselves in it; it is most easy to become their slave, and very difficult to shake of their yoke. I know that there is a medium between the extremity of vice and that of virtue: for example, modesty in elevation keeps

the medium between ambition and the love of abjection and contempt, sobriety between fasting and abstinence, and excess in eating and drinking, &c. &c.; but I know, likewise, that it is difficult for man to hit that medium in practice, and more difficult still to attach himself constantly to it. It is, if I am allowed to use the comparison, like pretending to put himself and to keep himself in equilibrium upon one single point; it is not impossible, but he may try it a thousand times without success.

These principles being once supposed, it is self-evident to me that Christ, who no doubt knew as well as we the genius of these passions, intended to make the supreme virtue of man to consist in *extreme* humility, in *extreme* self-denial of the senses, in *extreme* disengagement from riches, in *extreme* patience, and *extreme* meekness. Why? Because it is only by throwing himself into the extremes of virtue, if I may speak so, that man can infallibly shun the extremes of the opposite vices, of extreme pride, extreme sensuality, extreme covetousness, extreme anger.

It is more than clear to me that Christ in giving these counsels to men, showed to them the surest and most infallible means to secure their salvation, which, in the main, is their great and only affair, and for the success of which they can never undertake too much.

It is evident to me that these counsels, although but few persons, nay although nobody were to practise them, would be still beneficial to all men, because the sight of these counsels causes the force and importance of the precepts to be better felt, impresses with a greater fear to violate them, and with a greater zeal to fulfil them, and keeps in humble sentiments those whose virtue is too feeble to go beyond the fulfilment of the precepts.

It is, in fine, obvious to me, that the consideration of the counsels of Jesus Christ is a source of courage and comfort to those who, either through misfortune of their birth or by other causes, are under the necessity of practising the works which are the objects of such counsels, for the poor, for those

that spend their lives in obscurity and subjection, for those who see themselves reduced to suffer injustice and vexation without daring to complain, and the number of them is infinite.

All this is clearer than noon-day, and by a necessary inference from this it is likewise undeniable that the counsels of Jesus Christ are fraught with the deepest wisdom which we can never sufficiently admire.

CCIV. *Reflections on the Legislation or the Moral Law of Jesus Christ.*

Such is the faithful picture of the moral law of Jesus Christ. The more we study that law, the more we shall be convinced that it is a master piece of reason, of equity, of wisdom. This law forms a body of legislation so perfect that nothing can be added to it, nothing retrenched from it. It shows to man all his duties towards God, his Creator and Sovereign Master, towards his fellow-men and towards himself: it suits men considered in a body and as forming different societies among themselves, and each one in particular, in all situations in which they can possibly find themselves; it is appropriate to all countries and to all times. He that examines this law closely, is compelled to acknowledge, that he who is the author of it must have had a most profound knowledge of the whole man, of his mind, of his heart, of his passions, of his weaknesses, of all his evils, and of the remedies which were to be applied to them, of the true end of man, and of the means by which he was to be led to its attainment. It is manifest, that when men shall live up to that law, they will be as good and as happy in this world as they can possibly be according to the *condition of their nature.*

And, indeed, figure to yourself a people of true christians, that is to say, a people composed of men who all love God as their Father, and men as their brethren; who are all "one heart and one soul," who have but one and the same interest, and who all, in concert, tend to one and the same end, which is everlasting life, and who march all with one common movement

towards the same term which is heaven; none of them ever suffering the law to yield to passion, the general welfare to personal interest, the interest of eternity to that of time, (for such would be a nation of true christians.) Is it not true that such a people would be a great spectacle for the world, for the angels, and for men; that they would be venerated by all other nations, that they would be the happiest of mortals? Peace, which is the sweetest fruit of charity, would fix its abode in the midst of this people cherished by heaven. Never would there be heard among them the frightful cries of discord; for there would be seen neither injustice, nor violence, nor jealousy, nor rivalship. There you would find no one truly wretched, because there would be no wicked. Good things would be purely good, and bad things or evils would cease to be evils, because charity would render every good and every evil common.* I frankly advance, if there were no other life than this, if the destiny of men were confined to this earth, all nations ought to embrace the law of Jesus Christ.

If any one were to rise up against this holy law as bearing too hard upon flesh and blood, I would answer first, that for this very reason it was not conceived, much less carried into practice by flesh and blood; and that, notwithstanding its severity, it was practised by the Greeks and the Romans, and by the christian nations without number that have embraced it since, and who are incontestably the wisest and most enlightened of all nations. I would answer in the second place, that he is pleading the cause of the passions, and ask him whether the passions are just or unjust. If he answers me that the passions are just, I deliver him over to the censure of his own conscience and to that of all mankind who look upon him as a monster; and if he grants that the passions are unjust, I

* Such a people has existed: the primitive christians were people as holy and happy as I have just now portrayed. Witness the Acts of the Apostles. All the world knows the region (Paraguay) where a similar people existed not long ago, a people who were the admiration of the world. The religion of Jesus Christ had formed them, an ungodly and sophistic policy threw them back into their former state of savageness and brutality.

answer that it was, therefore, necessary to restrain them, and I defy him to find me a means better adapted to produce this effect than the law of Jesus Christ.

There are but few so lost to every principle as to attack the law of Jesus Christ, and of those few I am bold to say, that the infamy of their manners sufficiently avenges the sanctity of this divine law for the contempt which they affect to show for it; and it is clearly perceived that those bold mortals, swayed by an inflexible pride, have taken the part of condemning the law of Jesus Christ rather than of condemning themselves, and of impeaching God of injustice rather than of confessing that they are profligates.

Here would be the place to enlarge upon the admirable change which the law of Jesus Christ has made in the world, and on the advantages without number which mankind have derived from this law. But our plan will not admit of so extensive an excursion. We have said enough to convince every mind open to conviction, that Jesus, who has given the law, is either a God-man, or at least the ambassador of the Most High, (which suffices us for the moment,) for in its proper place we shall make it appear from a long array of undeniable arguments, and especially from his astonishing miracles, that Jesus Christ is really what the centurion proclaimed him to be at the universal convulsion of nature that took place at his death: "Vere Filius Dei erat iste." "Indeed this was the Son of God." Math. xxvii. 54.

CCV. Let us conclude with an extract from a work, which, being a masterpiece of composition with regard to style as well as to the interest of its subject, the author could wish to see placed in the hands of every class of society, but especially in the hands of youth, who pursue their education either in common schools or in literary institutions.

"In this decline of religion, and of the Jewish affairs, at the end of Herod's reign, and in the time the Pharisees were introducing so many abuses, Jesus Christ was sent upon earth to restore the kingdom into the house of David, after a more

sublime manner than the carnal Jews understood it, and to preach the doctrine, which God had resolved should be declared to the whole world. This wonderful child, called by Isaiah,* "the mighty God, the everlasting Father," and "the Prince of Peace," is born of a virgin at Bethlehem, and comes there to acknowledge the origin of his race. Conceived by the Holy Ghost, holy in his birth, alone worthy to make atonement for the guilt of others, he receives the name of JESUS,† or *Saviour*, because "he was to save us from our sins." Immediately upon his birth, a new star, the type of that light he was to show to the Gentiles, appears in the east, and guides to the yet infant Saviour, the first fruits of the conversion of the Gentiles. A little after, that Lord, so greatly desired, comes to his holy temple, where Simeon beholds him,‡ not only as "the glory of Israel," but also as "a light to lighten the Gentiles." When the time of preaching his gospel drew near, St. John the Baptist, who was to prepare his ways, called all sinners to repentance, and with his crying made the whole wilderness resound, where he had lived from his tenderest infancy with equal austerity and innocence. The people, who for five hundred years had seen no prophet, acknowledged this new Elias, and were ready to take him for the Saviour, so great did his sanctity appear: but he himself pointed out to the people, Him, "whose shoe's latchet he was not worthy to unloose."§ At the length Jesus Christ begins to preach his gospel and to reveal secrets he saw from all eternity "in the bosom of his father."‖ He lays the foundations of the church by the calling of twelve fishermen, and puts St. Peter at the head of the whole flock, with so manifest a prerogative, that the evangelists, who in the catalogue they make of the apostles observe no certain order, unanimously agree in naming St. Peter before all the rest as the first. Jesus Christ goes throughout all Judea, filling it with his benefits; healing the sick, having compassion upon sinners, whose true physician he shows himself, by the free access he allows them to his presence, making men feel at

* Isaiah, ix. 6. † Math. i. 21. ‡ Luke ii. 32. § John i. 27. ‖ Math. x. 2.

once an authority and sweetness, that never had appeared but in his person. He declares high mysteries; but confirms them by great miracles: he enjoins great virtues; but gives, at the same time, great illumination. And thereby does he appear "full of grace and truth, and we all receive of his fulness."*

"Every thing is consistent in his person; his life, his doctrine, his miracles. The same truth shines through the whole; every thing concurs to exhibit in him the master of mankind, and pattern of perfection.

"He, and only he, living among men, and in sight of all the world, could say without danger of being belied, "which of you convinceth me of sin?" And again, "I am the light of the world;" "my meat is to do the will of him that sent me. He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." †

"His miracles are of a peculiar order, and of a new character. They are not *signs in heaven*, ‡ such as the Jews sought after; he works them almost all upon men themselves, and to heal their infirmities. All these miracles speak even more goodness than power, and do not so much surprise the beholders, as they touch the bottom of their hearts. He performs them with authority: devils and diseases obey him: at his word the blind receive their sight, the dead arise, and sins are forgiven. The principle of the miracles is within himself; they flow from their source; "I perceive, saith he, that virtue is gone out of me." § And, indeed, none had ever performed either so great or so many miracles; and yet he promises that his disciples shall, in his name, do still *greater works than these*: ‖ so fruitful and inexhaustible is the virtue he possesses in himself.

"Who would not admire the condescension with which he tempers the sublimity of his doctrine? It is milk for babes, and at the same time meat for the strong. We see him full of the secrets of God; but we see him, not astonished at them, like other mortals to whom God is pleased to communicate him-

* John i. 14, 15, 16. † John viii. 46. Ibid. xii. 29. iv. 34. ‡ Math. xvi. 1.
§ Luke vi. 19. viii. 46. ‖ John xvi. 12.

self: he speaks naturally of them, as being born in that mystery and glory; and *what he hath without measure*,* he dispenses with measure, that so our weakness may be able to bear it.

"Although sent for all the world, he addresses himself at first only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to whom indeed he was sent in a more especial manner: but he prepares the way for the conversion of the Samaritans and Gentiles. A woman of Samaria acknowledges him the to be Christ,† whom her nation expected, as well as that of the Jews, and learns of him the mystery of the new worship, which should no longer be confined to any one certain place. A woman of Canaan and an idolatress,‡ though at first repulsed, forces from him, so to speak, the cure of her daughter. He discovers, in several places,§ the children of Abraham among the Gentiles, and speaks of his doctrine as being to be preached, gainsayed, and received over the whole earth. The world had never seen any such thing; and his apostles are astonished at it. He does not at all conceal from his followers, the fiery trials through which they were to pass. He shows them violence and seduction employed against them, persecutions, false doctrines, false brethren, war within, and war without, the faith purified by all these trials; in the last days, the decay of this faith, and charity waxing cold among his disciples; but in the midst of so many dangers, his church and the truth never to be overcome.

"Here then behold a new conduct, and a new order of things! The children of God are no longer buoyed up with the hopes of temporal rewards; Jesus Christ sets forth to them a future life, and keeping them in that expectation, he teaches them to disengage themselves from all sensible things. The cross and patience under it become their portion upon earth, and *heaven* is proposed to them as being *to be taken by force*.¶ Jesus Christ, who points out to men this new way, is the first himself to enter into it: he preaches pure truths, which confound gross, but self-conceited men: he detects the

* John iii. 34. † John iv. 21, 25. ‡ Mat. xv. 22. § Mat. xviii. 10. ¶ Mat. xi. 12.

hidden pride and hypocrisy of the Pharisees and doctors of the law, who corrupted it by their interpretations. In the midst of these reproaches he honours their ministry, and *Moses's seat where they sit.** He is often in the temple, causing its holiness to be reverenced, and sends to the priests the lepers he has cleansed. He thereby instructs men how they ought to reprove and check abuses, without prejudice of the ministry appointed by God: and shows, that the body of the synagogue subsisted notwithstanding the corruption of its particular members. But it was visibly tending to its ruin. The chief priests and Pharisees stirred up against Jesus Christ, the Jewish people, whose religion was degenerating into superstition. That people cannot bear the Saviour of the world, calling them to a solid, but difficult practice. The holiest and best of all men, nay, holiness and goodness itself, becomes the most envied and hated. He is not discouraged, nor ceases doing good to his countrymen; but he sees their ingratitude; he foretells its punishment with tears, and denounces to Jerusalem her approaching fall. He prophesies also, that the Jews, enemies to the truth he declared to them, should be delivered up to error, and become the sport of false prophets. Meantime the jealousy of the Pharisees and chief priests is bringing him to an infamous punishment: his disciples forsake him; one of them betrays him: the first, and most zealous of them all denies him thrice. Accused before the council, he honours the priest's office to the last, and answers in precise terms the high-priest, that interrogates him judicially. But the moment was come for the synagogue's reprobation. The high-priest and whole council condemn Jesus Christ, because he called himself the Christ, the Son of God. He is delivered up to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor: his innocence is acknowledged by his judge, whom policy and interest induce to act contrary to his conscience: the just one is condemned to death; the most heinous of all crimes makes way for the most perfect obedience that ever the world saw. Jesus, master of his life, and of all things, gives up himself vo-

* Math. xxiii. 2.

luntarily to the fury of wicked men, and offers the sacrifice, which was to be the expiation of mankind. On the cross, he beholds in the prophecies what yet remained for him to do: he fulfils it, and says at last, *It is finished.** At this word the world undergoes an universal change; the law ceases, its figures pass away, its sacrifices are abolished by a more perfect oblation. This done, Jesus Christ, with a loud cry, gives up the ghost: all nature is moved: the centurion who watched him, astonished at such a death, cries out, *Truly, this was the Son of God:*† and the spectators return smiting their breasts. On the third day he rises again; he appears to his followers who had deserted him, and who obstinately persisted in disbelieving his resurrection. They see him, talk with him, touch him, and are convinced. To confirm the faith of his resurrection, he shows himself to them at sundry times, and in diverse circumstances. His disciples see him in private, and they see him also all together; he appears once to above five hundred brethren assembled.‡ An apostle, who has recorded it, assures, that the greatest part of them were yet alive, when he wrote it. Jesus Christ risen again, gives his apostles what time they please to consider him well, and after having put himself into their hands, in all the shapes they desire, so that there can no longer remain the smallest doubt, he commands them to bear witness of what they have seen, of what they have heard, and of what their hands have handled. And that none may doubt of their candour, any more than of their persuasion, he obliges them to seal their testimony with their blood. Thus their preaching is unshaken; the foundation of it is a positive fact, unanimously attested by those that saw it. Their sincerity is justified by the strongest proof imaginable; which is that of torments, and of death itself. Such are the instructions the apostles received. Upon this foundation twelve fishermen undertake the conversion of the whole world, which they saw so set against the laws they had to prescribe, and the truths they had to proclaim. They are commanded to begin at Jerusalem, and thence to go into all the world, and

* John xix. 30. † Math. xxvii. 54. Mark xv. 39. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 6.

" teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."* Jesus Christ promises to " be with them always, even unto the end of the world ;" and by this saying assures the perpetual continuance of the ecclesiastical function. Having thus spoken, he ascends into heaven in their presence.

The promises are about to be accomplished : the prophecies are going on to receive their final eclaircissement. The Gentiles are called to the knowledge of God, by the orders of Jesus Christ risen. A new ceremony is instituted for the regeneration of the new people : and the faithful learn that the true God, the God of Israel, that one undivided God, to whom they are consecrated in baptism, is at once, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

There then are set forth to us the incomprehensible depths of the Divine Being, the ineffable greatness of his unity, and the infinite riches of that nature, still more fruitful within than without, capable of communicating itself without division to three equal persons.

There are unfolded mysteries which were wrapped, and, as it were, sealed up in the ancient scriptures. We now understand the secret of that saying, " Let us make man in our image ;"† and the Trinity intimated in the creation of man, is expressly declared in his regeneration.

We learn what is that wisdom, " which the Lord possessed in the beginning of his way, before his works of old ; the wisdom who is his daily delight, and by whom all his works are ordained.‡" We know who he was whose birth David saw *from the womb of the morning ;*§ and the New-Testament teacheth us, that he is the *Word*, the internal word of God, and his eternal thought, who is always in his bosom, and by whom all things were made.

We thereby can answer the mysterious question proposed in the proverbs : " What is the name of God, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell ?"‖ For we know that this name

* Luke, xxiv. 47. Acts, i. 9. Mark, xvi. 15. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. † Gen. i. 26. ‡ Prov. viii. 22. § Psalms, cx. ‖ Prov. xxx. 4.

of God, so mysterious and so concealed, is the name of the Father, understood in that profound sense, which makes us conceive him from eternity *Father* of a Son equal to himself, and that the name of his Son is the name of *the Word; the Word* which he eternally begets by the contemplating of himself which is the perfect expression of his truth, his image, his only Son, " the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."*

Together with the Father and the Son we know also the *Holy Ghost*, the love of both, and their eternal union. It is that spirit who makes the prophets, and is in them to discover to them the counsels of God, and the secrets of futurity; the spirit of whom it is written, " The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me,"† who is distinguished from the Lord, and is also the Lord himself, since he sends the prophets, and discovers future things. That Spirit who speaks to the prophets, and by the prophets, is united with the Father and the Son, and interposes with them in the consecration of the new man.

Thus the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God in three persons, shown more darkly to our fathers, is clearly revealed in the new covenant. Instructed in so high a mystery, and astonished at its incomprehensible depth, we cover our faces before God with the seraphims, which Isaiah saw, and with them we worship him who is thrice holy.‡

It belonged to the only Son " who was in the bosom of the Father,"§ and who, without leaving it, came to us; to him it belonged to discover to us fully those wonderful secrets of the Divine Nature, which Moses and the prophets had but slightly glanced at.

To him it belonged to make us understand whence it came to pass, that the Messiah, promised as a man who was to save other men, was at the same time exhibited as God, in the singular number, and absolutely after the same manner in which the creator is designed to us: and this indeed he has done, by teaching us that, though the Son of Abraham, " *before Abraham was, He is*," that he " came down from heaven, and yet

* Heb. i. 3. † Isaiah, xlviii. 16. ‡ Isaiah, vi. 1, 2, 3. § John, i. 18.

that he is in heaven :" that he is at once God, the Son of God, and Man, the son of man; the true Emanuel, God with us; in short, the Word made flesh, uniting in his person the human nature with the divine, in order *to reconcile all things unto himself.**

Thus are revealed to us the two great mysteries, that of the Trinity, and that of the Incarnation. But he who has revealed them, makes us to find the image of them in ourselves, that so they may be ever present with us, and that we may understand the dignity of our nature.

In fact, if we impose silence on our senses, and shut ourselves up for a while in the inmost recesses of our soul, that is, in that part where truth makes its voice to be heard, we shall there see some image of the Trinity we adore. The thought which we perceive to spring up as the bud of our mind, as the sun of our understanding, gives us some idea of the Son of God eternally conceived in the mind of the heavenly Father. Wherefore this Son of God assumes the name of the *Word*, that so we may understand him springing up in the bosom of the Father, not as bodies spring up, but as does that internal Word, which we perceive in our soul, when we contemplate the truth.

But the fruitfulness of our mind is not confined to that internal world, that intellectual thought, that image of the truth, which is formed in us. We love both that internal word, and the mind in which it springs; and by loving it we perceive in ourselves something no less precious to us than our mind and our thought, which is the fruit of both, which unites them, is united to them, and constitutes with them but one and the same life.

Thus, and as far as there can be found any analogy between God and man, thus, I say, is produced in God the eternal love, which proceeds from the Father who thinks, and from the Son who is his thought, in order to make with him and his thought, one and the same nature equally happy and perfect.

In short, God is perfect; and his Word, the living image of

* Col. i. 20.

infinite truth, is no less perfect than he; and his love, which, proceeding from the inexhaustible source of good, hath all the fullness of it, cannot fail of having an infinite perfection: and since we have no other idea of God than that of perfection, each of these subsistences considered in itself deserves to be called God: but because these three agree necessarily to one and the same nature, these three are but one God.

We must not then conceive any thing unequal, or separate in this adorable Trinity: and however incomprehensible the equality may be, our soul, if we listen to it, will tell us something of it.

It is, and as it knows perfectly what it is, its understanding is correspondent to the truth of its being; and as it loves its being, together with its understanding, as much as they deserve to be loved, its love equals the perfection of both. These three are never to be separated, and contain one another: we understand that we are, and that we love; and we love to be, and to understand. Who can deny this if he understands himself? And not only one is no better than another, but the three together are no better than any one of them in particular, seeing each contains the whole, and in the three consists the happiness and dignity of the rational nature. Thus, and in an infinitely higher degree is the Trinity, whom we worship, and to whom we are consecrated by our baptism, perfect, inseparable, one in essence, and in short, equal in every sense.

But we ourselves, who are the image of the Trinity, in another respect are also the image of the incarnation.

Our soul, of a spiritual and incorruptible nature, has a corruptible body united to it; and from the union of both results a whole, which is man, a mind and body together, at the same time incorruptible and corruptible, at once intelligent, and merely brutish. These attributes agree to the whole, with relation to each of its two parts: thus, the divine Word, whose virtue sustains the whole, is united in a peculiar manner, or rather becomes itself, by a perfect union, that Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, which makes one to be God and man

together: begotten in eternity, and begotten in time; ever living in the bosom of the Father, and dying upon the cross for our salvation.

But wherever God is concerned, comparisons drawn from human things cannot but be imperfect. Our soul is not before our body, and something is wanting to that, when separated from this. The Word, perfect in itself from all eternity, unites itself to our nature, only to honour it. That soul which presides over the body, and makes various changes in it, suffers itself some from it in its turn. If the body is moved at the command, and according to the will of the soul, the soul is troubled, the soul is afflicted, and agitated a thousand ways, either painful or pleasing, according to the disposition of the body; so that as the soul exalts the body to itself by governing it, it is also debased beneath itself by the things it suffers from it; but in Jesus Christ the Word presides over all, the Word keeps all under its management. Thus man is exalted, and the Word is not debased by any occurrence; immoveable and unalterable, it rules in all things, and in all places that nature which is united to it.

Hence it comes, that in Jesus Christ man is absolutely subject to the inward direction of the Word, which exalts him to itself, has none but divine thoughts, none but divine affections. All he thinks, all he wills, all he says, all he conceals within, all he discovers without, is animated by the Word, guided by the Word, worthy of the Word, that is, worthy of reason itself, of wisdom itself, and of truth itself. Therefore all is light in Christ Jesus; his conduct is a rule; his miracles are instructions; his words are spirit, and life.

It is not given to all rightly to understand these sublime truths, nor perfectly to see in themselves that marvellous image of divine things which St. Augustine and the other fathers have believed so certain. The senses govern us too much, and our imagination, which will intrude itself in all our thoughts, does not permit us always to dwell upon so pure a light. We do not know ourselves; we are ignorant of the riches we bear in our nature, and no eyes, but the most pure, can per-

ceive them. But the little we do enter into this secret, and discern in ourselves the image of the two mysteries, which are the foundation of our faith, is sufficient to raise us above all earthly things, so that no mortal object can turn us from it.

And therefore does Jesus Christ call us to an immortal glory, which is the fruit of the faith we have in the mysteries.

That God-man, that incarnate truth and wisdom, which makes us believe so great things upon his sole authority, promises us the clear and beatific vision of them in eternity, as the certain reward of our faith.

In this way, is the mission of Jesus Christ infinitely exalted above that of Moses.

B. Bossuet's Universal History, Part II. pp. 197—208.

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